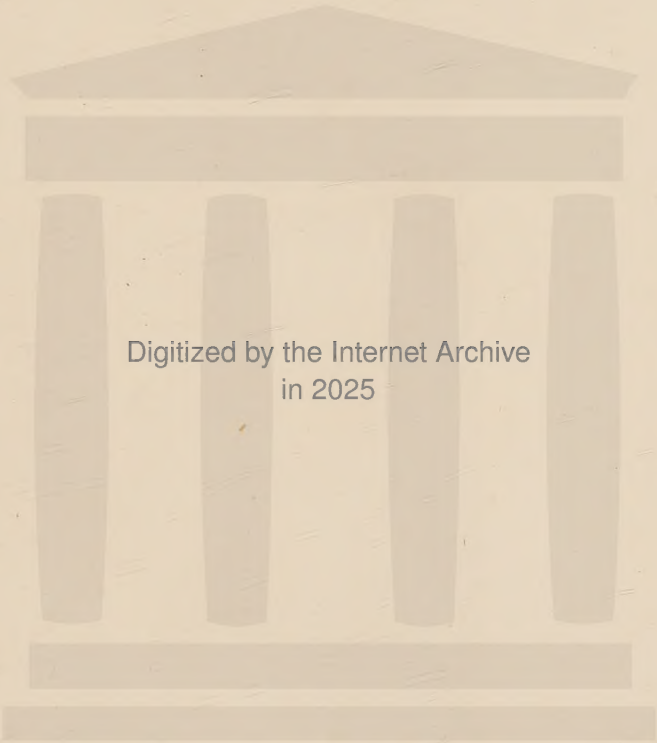
THE TABERNACLE.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HIGH PRIEST.

Frontispiece.

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THE TABERNACLE

AND

ITS PRIESTS AND SERVICES

DESCRIBED, AND CONSIDERED

IN RELATION TO

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

WITH DIAGRAMS, VIEWS, AND WOODCUTS

By WILLIAM BROWN

"I have loved the habitations of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth."
PSALM xxvi. 8.

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PREFACE.

THE substance of the following chapters was originally given in a series of lessons to a Young Women's Bible Class. The subject was illustrated by diagrams, and by a Model Tabernacle made by me for the purpose. Much interest was shown by the class in the lessons, and it is hoped that in their present form they may prove, in some measure, interesting and instructive to a wider circle. With a view to perspicuity, the illustrations accompany the text, though this occasionally necessitates repetition. A glance at the table of contents, and at the list of illustrations, will be sufficient to show the plan of the work.

W. B.

EDINBURGH, 5 HANOVER STREET,
June 1871.

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THE TABERNACLE.

"Let them make me a sanctuary."

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THOUGH the Tabernacle was made with hands, yet the Lord not only drew the plan of it Himself, but also exhibited a model of it to His servant Moses, who was frequently reminded to make all things according to the pattern shewed to him in the mount (Exod. xxv. 9, 40; Heb. viii. 5). The Lord also chose the chief artists under whose superintendence it was to be constructed (Exod. xxxi. 1-6). Are not these circumstances alone sufficient to invest this sacred building with an abiding interest? As a work of art, it was far more beautiful and costly than many persons are apt to suppose. Even Dean Stanley says: "There is no inherent connection between ugliness and godliness, and there was a greater danger of superstition in the rough planks and black haircloths of the Tabernacle than ever was in the gilded walls and marble towers of the Temple."—"Lectures on the Jewish Church." Second Series, p. 227.

Admitting the superiority of the Temple in some respects to the Tabernacle, would any one unacquainted with the Bible description of the latter, on reading the above quota-

tion, ever fancy that the foundation of the Tabernacle was one of solid silver; that the planks or boards composing its walls were all *very smooth*, and, moreover, overlaid with pure gold; that its pillars were graceful and adorned with capitals; that even the capitals of the pillars of the surrounding court and their connecting rods were plated or gilded with silver; and that the goat's-hair curtains, even granting that they were black (though most writers are of opinion that they were manufactured of fine white, soft, silky hair, similar to that of the Angora goat), were draped with the most brilliant and gorgeous tapestry, into which figures of lovely cherubs were interwoven? There certainly was no roughness or coarseness either within or without. The structure was alike worthy of its divine Architect, the overflowing liberality of the Israelites, who gave two or three hundred thousand pounds sterling worth of gifts for its construction, and of the many skilled artisans who lovingly vied with each other in carrying out the design of their God and King.

It would not be right to judge of the importance of a Bible subject by the space it occupies in holy writ; yet it may not be unworthy of remark that much more is said about the Tabernacle than about Solomon's Temple, both in the Old and New Testament. Nearly three hundred verses in Exodus are devoted to an account of the Tabernacle and its furniture, whilst the corresponding account of the Temple and its furniture, in 1st and 2d Kings, is comprised in half that number of verses.

It is true that the Tabernacle and its priests, and the rites and sacrifices of which it was the scene, have passed away, but the description and history of them remain, and constitute part of those sacred writings, which testify of Christ. "Moses wrote of Me."

Many of the most important words and phrases employed in the New Testament have either arisen from or are illustrated by the Tabernacle and its rites, of which the following are examples: "Vail," "Mercy-Seat," "Propi-

tiation," "Laver of Regeneration," "Priest," "High Priest," "Redeemed," "Intercession," "Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," "Washed," "Cleansed," "Purged," "Reconciled," "Sacrifice," "Offering," "Atonement," "Without shedding of blood is no remission," "Gave Himself for us," "Bare our sins in His own body on the tree."

An earnest and prayerful study of the Tabernacle, and the purposes it served, cannot fail to increase our knowledge of the grand truths of redemption. That you may find the following chapters in some degree interesting, and derive some profit from their perusal, and may, while studying this earthly sanctuary, be growing in meetness for the heavenly one and its unutterable joys, is the prayer of your friend the Author. May David's choice be yours—"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple."

TABLE OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES GENERALLY ADOPTED.

18 inches, ...	= 1 cubit.
3000 shekels, ...	= 1 talent.
1500 oz. troy.	= 1 talent.

In taking the talent to weigh 1500 oz., it is right to state that considerable diversity of opinion exists as to the number of grains or ounces in a talent of gold, silver, or copper respectively.

CHAPTER II.

GIFTS OF MATERIALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TABERNACLE.

MANY chapels are burdened with a load of debt occasioned by the bad habit of congregations building, either wholly or in part, with borrowed money. But the Hebrews acted more nobly than such builders, for they supplied, by voluntary contributions, the varied materials with which the sanctuary was constructed ere they began to build (Exod. xxv. 1-9; xxxv. 4-9, 20-30). Their free-will offering for the work of the tabernacle is, in many respects, the most splendid one that was ever given for the purpose of raising a place of worship.

Gold.

Foremost in the procession of willing-hearted offerers came men and women bringing "nose-rings, and ear-rings, and seal-rings, and necklaces,"* all of gold (Exod. xxxv. 22), till the heap comprised many thousands of articles, and weighed no less than 29 talents and 730 shekels (Exod. xxxviii. 24), equal to 43,865 ounces. The value of this quantity of the precious metal at the present day is £184,233, but the worth of the above "jewels of gold" probably far exceeded that large sum.

* Young's Translation.

Silver.

Gold was contributed by men and women, but silver by men only. This, however, was not on account of the women, who cheerfully gave their gold ornaments, refusing to part with their silver ones, but because silver was to be taken from none but adult males, who were required to give half a shekel each as a ransom for the soul (person) (Exod. xxx. 11-16). The sum of the silver brought was 301,775 shekels (Exod. xxxviii. 25-27), which proves that every one of the 603,550 men comprising the Hebrew encampment paid the price of his redemption. This was done, however, not by compulsion, but freely; the silver as well as the gold was to be a free-will offering (Exod. xxv. 2, 3). The whole was equal to 150,887½ ounces. This weight of silver would now realise £41,808, 8s. 2¾d. sterling.

Silver appears to have been the only metal used as money by the Hebrews, at least up to the period of the Exodus, and this circumstance no doubt accounts for the ransom price being paid in silver (Gen. xxiii. 15; xxxvii. 28).

Brass.

Gold and silver were the most precious metals, but brass (copper) was also needed for the work of the Tabernacle, and those who possessed it, and amongst them might be some who had no gold to bestow, brought 70 talents and 2400 shekels (Exod. xxxviii. 29), equal to 106,200 ounces. The original word rendered brass in the text is from a Hebrew root signifying to shine. As brass, which is a mixture of copper and zinc, was not known to the ancient Egyptians, it is generally thought now that the Hebrew word signifies copper, or copper with a slight alloy of tin.

Not included in the above offering were the brazen mirrors of certain pious women, mentioned in Exod. xxxviii. 8. Seeing that the "Laver" was made of these, it is very likely that the metal was of a very superior

quality. Some are of opinion that Moses took possession of them by force, but this is extremely unlikely, as the Tabernacle and its sacred furniture were to be made only of materials which had been freely given. If the golden ornaments parted with for the work of the Tabernacle showed not a little self-denial on the part of the donors, the giving of these mirrors, perhaps, was even a more signal instance of this grace.

Linen.

Men gave flax, and women gave yarn, or rather the flax which men brought (Exod. xxxv. 23) was also brought by women after they had spun it into yarn (v. 25). The Hebrew word "shesh" is rendered fine linen in our version of the Scriptures, and evidently stands for both flax and yarn.

Blue and Purple and Scarlet.

It was the same with the dyed as with the undyed stuff. The dyed flax which had been brought by the men (Exod. xxxv. 23) was also brought by the women after they had spun it into yarn (v. 25.) Josephus, Dr Kalisch, and other able writers assert that wool is the substance called by the above colours. I have tried hard, without being able to agree with them. Scarlet wool is without doubt the material called scarlet in Lev. xiv. 4. Heb. ix. 19, proves this. Since, however, scarlet wool was called by the name of the colour it bore, so in all probability would flax and linen yarn. If the "blue" and the "purple" and the "scarlet" were wool, it must follow that the garments of the high priest (Exod. xxxix. 1-26), and the girdle of the common priest (Exod. xxxix. 29), were made of cloth containing a mixture of wool and linen, a thing strictly forbidden in the Scriptures (Lev. xix. 19; Deut. xxii. 11.) Josephus makes very short work of this formidable objection to his view, by remarking that the reason why the people were forbidden to wear garments of this sort was that such were worn by the priests only; but few persons who read

Lev. xix. 19, and Deut. xxii. 11, will agree with him. *See* also Ezekiel xliv. 17.

Dr Kalisch, in support of wool, speaks of "its peculiar susceptibility for these shining colours." But flax, according to the mode of dying in Egypt at the time we are referring to, was sufficiently susceptible for the purpose required. The ancient Egyptians appear to have been at no loss in dying flax or linen yarn bright colours, as numerous specimens in the British Museum, in the East India House, and in the possession of Mr Wilkinson and others, abundantly prove.* There is no necessity, then, either on Scriptural or scientific grounds, for importing wool into the text.

Goats' Hair.

Goats' hair formed part of the free-will offerings of the Israelites (Exod. xxxv. 23). Many of the goats of the East have black hair, of which cloth is made for tent coverings, but there are some species of goats which have fine white silky hair, among which is the Angora goat, and not a few writers are of opinion that it was hair of this sort with which the tent of the Tabernacle was made.

Rams' Skins.

The Israelites, being rich in flocks and herds, would find no difficulty in supplying rams' skins. Those brought by the Israelites (Exod. xxxv. 23) were dyed and probably tanned. "Leather of this very description is still sold in Syrian towns. From time out of mind the southern part of Syria and Palestine has been supplied with mutton from the great plains and deserts in the north, east, and south; and the shepherds do not ordinarily bring the females to market. The vast flocks which annually come from Armenia and Northern Syria are nearly all males. The leather,

* *See* Wilkinson's "Ancient Egyptians," vol. iii., 113-128. Lang's "Egypt," vol. ii., 188-196.

therefore, is literally 'rams' skins dyed red.'" *See* "Land and Book," p. 97.

Badgers' Skins.

The Hebrews brought badgers' (tachash) as well as rams' skins. It is generally admitted that "badger" is a wrong interpretation of the Hebrew word "tachash," but the learned are not agreed as to what animal is intended. Some are of opinion that it was a fish, and others that it was a quadruped; but whether it swam the ocean or ranged the forest, it was not unlikely a large and powerful creature, since its skin was used for the sacred tent's outer covering, which doubtless required to be of a tough and strong nature. This would not, however, prevent the skins from being made suitable for ornamental purposes. Sandals formed of these skins appear to have been worn by ladies when dressed in the most costly and splendid attire, and decked with the most precious ornaments; "I have shod thee with badgers' skins" (Ezekiel xvi. 10); so there can be little doubt that the outer covering or roof of the Tabernacle was not only strong, but also beautiful and ornamental. It is not improbable that the shoes or sandals of the Hebrew pilgrims were also made of this material; and if they were, it was as effectual in defending their feet as it was in preserving the Tabernacle from those influences that might have been hurtful to it: "Thy foot did not swell these forty years."

Shittim Wood.

Every man with whom was found shittim wood brought it (Exod. xxxv. 24). It is generally believed that this was the wood of the acacia tree, which is common in the desert of Sinai, and of which there are several species. Mr Livingstone thinks that the acacia giraff (camel thorn) is the shittah of Scriptures. He describes it as a tree of slow growth, extremely hard, and attaining to a good old age. "It is probable," he says, "that this is the tree of which the

Tabernacle was constructed, as it is reported to be found where the Israelites were at the time it was made. It is an imperishable wood, while that usually pointed out as the shittim soon decays, and wants beauty."—"Livingstone's Travels in South Africa," pp. 112, 113.

Trees do not now grow in the region of Sinai, nor probably ever grew there of a sufficient thickness and height out of which to cut boards or bars the size of those used in the construction of the Tabernacle. Each Tabernacle board must therefore have consisted of two or more pieces of wood joined together, yet so as to form but one board, and each bar may also have consisted of several pieces united, yet so as to form but one only. The Egyptian carpenters far excelled our modern ones at this kind of work. *See* Wilkinson, vol. iii., p. 170.

Onyx Stones, and Stones for the Ephod.

These were brought by the rulers (princes) of Israel, and are often mentioned in the Scriptures as gems of great value.

Spice and Oil.

These which were used for the light and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, were also brought by the princes of Israel.

Workers.

Bezaleel and Aholiab were the principal artists and chief workmen appointed by God to construct the Tabernacle (Exod. xxxv. 30-35 ; xxxvi. 1-7); but they were not the only artisans, for many volunteers wrought under their superintendence: every one who was qualified for any work came and did it. The people seemed as willing to lend their hands as they had been to give their property. Women as well as men joyfully engaged in this labour of love. The women were the spinners, and the men were the weavers. By means of the liberal gifts and busy hands of this willing people, the structure was soon com-

pleted. The Lord's command was obeyed—"Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst."

The exact value of the fabric that was fashioned out of the various materials cannot be known, but the following estimate may not be far from it:

Gold, 43,865 oz., at £4, 4s. per oz., .	£184,233	0	0
Silver, 150,887½ oz., at 5s. 6½d. per oz., .	41,808	8	2¾
Brass (copper), 106,200 oz., at ¾d. per oz., .	331	17	6
	£226,373	5	8¾
Say for probable higher price of the precious metals at the time of the Exodus, .	25,000	0	0
	£251,373	5	8¾

And if you add to this the value of all the other materials and that of the workmanship, £300,000 sterling may not be too high a sum at which to value the Tabernacle. But even this large sum does not fully indicate the liberality of the pilgrim Israelites, for we do not know how much more stuff they would have brought had they not been "restrained from bringing, for the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much" (Exod. xxxvi. 6, 7).

New Testament Israelites are invited to bring gifts for the building of a greater temple than the Tabernacle, and in order that all may enjoy the privilege of giving, the very smallest offerings are acceptable. As hair and skins brought by some Israelites, who may not have had jewels to bestow, were as necessary for the construction of the Tabernacle as the more costly offerings of their richer brethren, so the coppers of the poor, or of little children, are as needful for the building of the Church of God as the sovereigns of the wealthy. The immense service rendered by pence in spreading the Redeemer's kingdom is beyond all human calculation. Pence only, however, will not be an acceptable offering from those who have the more precious metals at their disposal. Gold and silver, as well as copper, were among the materials with which the Tabernacle was constructed, and they are also required for the

building of the Church of God. If you have them, and would follow the example of the Hebrew givers, you will not keep them back. If the poor bring pence, see that ye forget not to lay silver and gold on the altar. One thing in particular the Lord asks you to give. Refuse it, and your offerings, however costly, will be discarded by Him as naught; but give Him this one thing, and then, as in the case of the Hebrew givers, all else He would like you to bring will crowd after it, and be heaped along with it on the gospel altar. "Son, daughter, give me thine heart."

Be not content with mere giving, be girt for service. There is plenty work in the Christian Church, not only for Bezaleels and Aholiabs, for our ministers and elders and missionaries, but for all Christ's disciples. None are so uninfluential but may do something for the Master's cause. If not in teaching little children the sweet name of Jesus, or in visiting the abodes of the godless, or in handing tracts to this and that person as opportunity offers, yet in one or other of the endless ways in which they may engage in works of faith and labours of love. How many, alas! who bear Christ's name stand listlessly by, and refuse to give heed to the Master's voice—"Why stand ye here, all the day idle?"

If Christians were to give as liberally as the Hebrews gave for the work of the Tabernacle, the Church's coffers would soon so overflow as to necessitate a proclamation from every pulpit in Christendom commanding the people to bring no more gifts, for there was enough already, and too much; and were all who are able for any work about Zion to come and do it, the labourers would no longer be few, but many, and sufficiently numerous as instruments for the conversion of the whole world. How speedily, then, would Zion's walls be built up and the great temple of living stones completed! Do you long for this glorious consummation? If you do, see that ye delay it not, either by not giving as the Lord hath prospered you, or by sitting

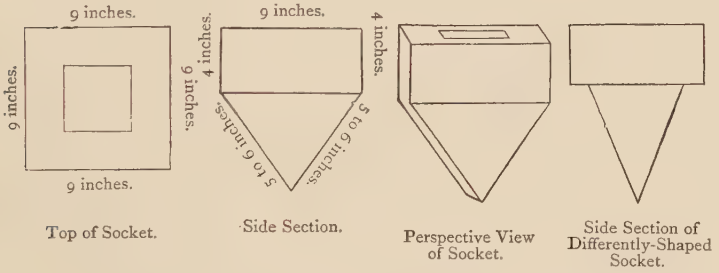
with folded hands while you should be up and working. And, dear friend, if you have put your hand to this blessed employment, let your resolution be that of one of the noblest builders of old—"I am engaged in a great work and cannot come down."

CHAPTER III.

THE SILVER FOUNDATION.

THE hundred talents of silver, paid by the men Israelites, for the ransom of their persons, were transformed into 100 sockets for the foundation of the Tabernacle, so that this portable temple literally rested on atonement money (Exod. xxx. 16; xxxviii. 25-27).

Silver is now sold in ingots or bars measuring 2 inches square and 8 inches long, and weighing 120 oz. According to this data, a talent of silver (1500 oz.) is sufficient to form a square tapering socket 9 inches square at the top and 9 or 10 inches deep.

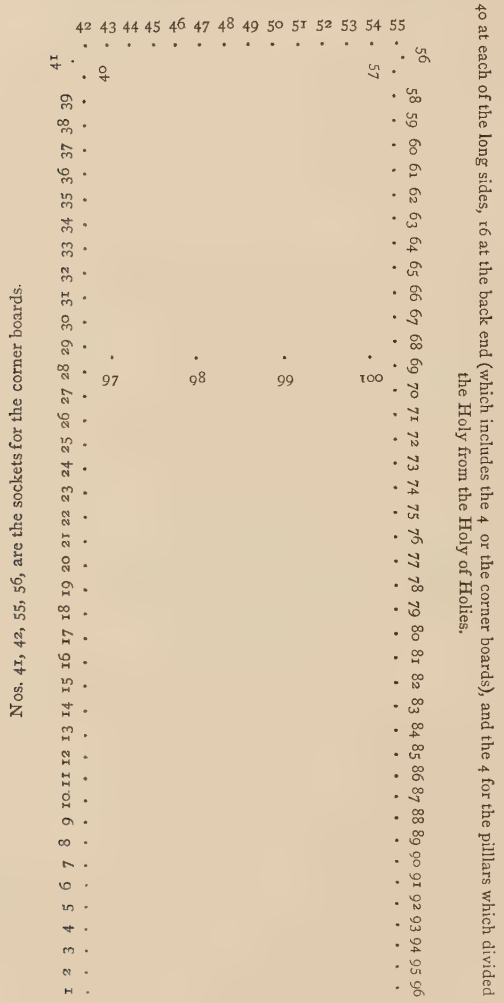


Top of Socket. Side Section. Perspective View of Socket. Side Section of Differently-Shaped Socket.

Scale—2¼ inches to a cubit and a half, or 27 inches.

Sockets this size and shape would require to be inserted in the ground and placed at the distance of 4½ inches from one another.

THE ONE HUNDRED SILVER SOCKETS.

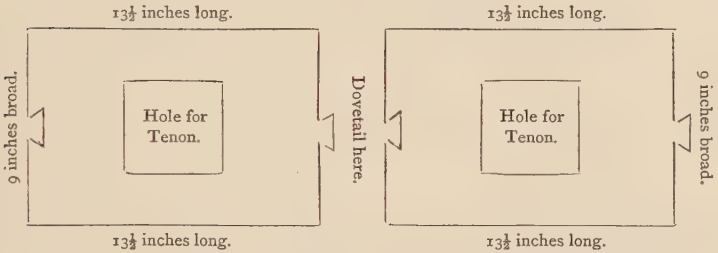

40 at each of the long sides, 16 at the back end (which includes the 4 or the corner boards), and the 4 for the pillars which divided the Holy from the Holy of Holies.
Nos. 41, 42, 55, 56, are the sockets for the corner boards.
97
98
99
100

Scale—5 inches to 30 cubits, or 45 feet.

The dots intended to represent the position of the centre of the sockets

More probably, however, the sockets stood on the ground, and formed one continuous base of silver along the three-walled sides of the Tabernacle. To form such a base, each socket would require to measure 13½ inches in length. A talent of silver is sufficient to form a socket that length, and 9 inches broad and about 4½ inches deep. The following diagrams represent two sockets of these dimensions, and made so as to dovetail into each other.

FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.

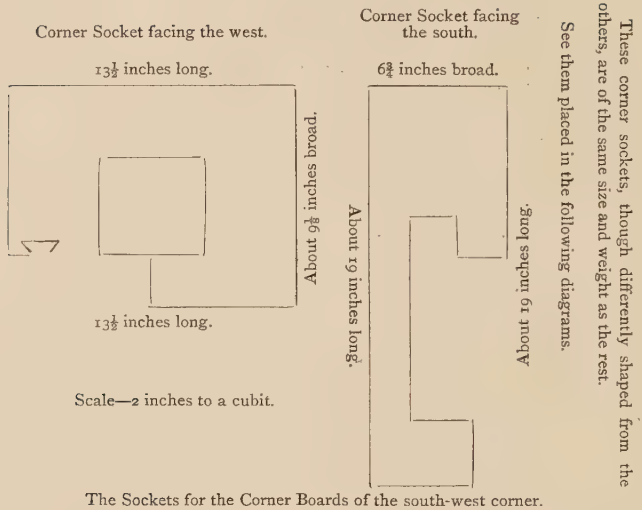


Face or upper side of two Sockets constructed so as to dovetail into each other.

Scale—2 inches to a cubit.

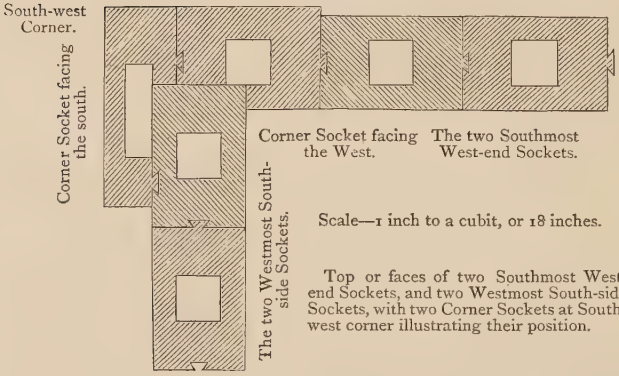
Forty such sockets, the number placed along each of the long sides (Exod. xxvi. 19-27) correspond in length exactly to that of the Tabernacle, viz., 45 feet (30 cubits), and the length of twelve similar sockets, with two-thirds of that of other two placed at the back end, correspond exactly to its internal breadth, viz., 15 feet (10 cubits). Four of the sixteen back-end sockets required to be differently shaped and situated from the others, and so as to suit the corner-boards which rested upon them. *See* these points illustrated in the three following diagrams:

FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.


Corner Socket facing the west.
13½ inches long.
About 9⅛ inches broad.
13½ inches long.
Scale—2 inches to a cubit.
Corner Socket facing the south.
6¾ inches broad.
About 19 inches long.
About 19 inches long.
These corner sockets, though differently shaped from the others, are of the same size and weight as the rest.
See them placed in the following diagrams.

The Sockets for the Corner Boards of the south-west corner.

FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.


South-west Corner.
Corner Socket facing the south.
Corner Socket facing the West.
The two Southmost West-end Sockets.
The two Westmost South-side Sockets.
Scale—1 inch to a cubit, or 18 inches.
Top or faces of two Southmost West-end Sockets, and two Westmost South-side Sockets, with two Corner Sockets at South-west corner illustrating their position.

The sockets firmly united together, and especially the corner ones, were admirably adapted, along with the bars, to be noticed afterwards, to hold and bear up the boards. The sockets may also have been fixed to the ground by pins, or some other simple contrivance; but probably this was not necessary, owing to their weight, which was upwards of four tons. The four remaining sockets, the basis having embraced 96, were used as supports for the inner vail pillars.

DIAGRAM

(From Model Tabernacle)

Of tops of the Hundred Silver Sockets as set, placed, or fixed in their places, and forming the foundation of the Tabernacle.

Nos. 41 & 42 are the corner sockets for the corner board.

Nos. 55 & 56 are the corner sockets for the corner board.

The Holy of Holies.

The four sockets for the four pillars that divided the Tabernacle into two apartments.

The Holy Place.

The One Hundred Silver Sockets.

Scale—$\frac{7}{8}$ of an inch to 30 cubits.

Measure from inside margin of socket holes.

Dotted line indicates the boundary between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

The worth of these hundred ransom silver sockets being £41,808 sterling, they constituted a very costly basis, one from which our thoughts very naturally rise to an infinitely valuable foundation, and like that of the Tabernacle, consisting of the price of redemption, even the precious blood of Christ. Prophets and apostles alike testify that the doctrine of the atonement is that on which the spiritual edifice rests.

If the sockets had not been made of the atonement money as commanded (Exod. xxx. 16; xxxviii. 27), but of some other material, God certainly would not have acknowledged the Tabernacle, which rested on them as His palace temple. He never would have enthroned Himself in visible symbol on the mercy-seat. In like manner, those who substitute their own good works, or anything else in the room of the Redeemer, on which to build their hope of salvation, are building on the sand, and cannot form a part of that building which is an "habitation of God through the spirit," for "other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Christ Jesus." Rest, then, on Him, and on Him alone, and your hope will be founded on a rock that will never fail you, and you will be one of the living stones of the great spiritual temple, and He who dwelt between the cherubim will dwell in you, and be your God.

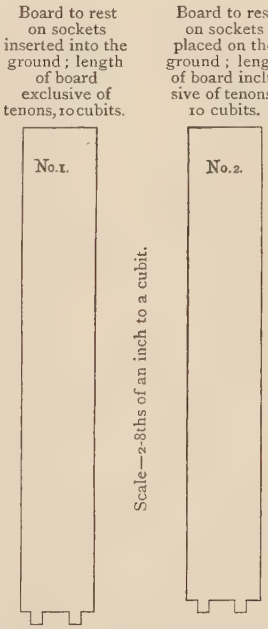
"I stand upon His merit,
I know no other stand;
Not e'en where glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOLDEN FRAMEWORK

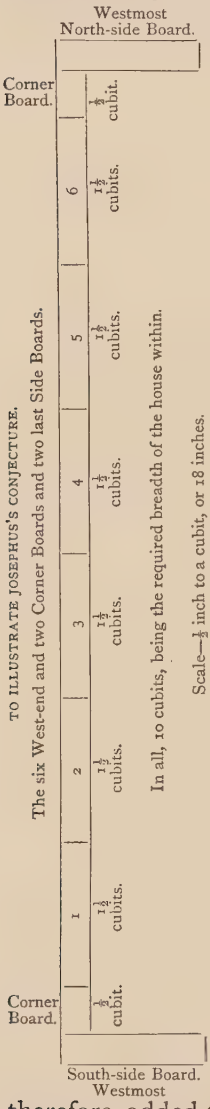
OF BOARDS, BARS, AND PILLARS.

THE superstructure which rested on the silver foundation, consisted of 48 boards overlaid with gold, each 10 cubits high and 1½ cubits broad. Twenty of these formed the south wall, 20 the north wall, and 6 with two corner ones the west or back wall (Exod. xxvi. 15-25; xxxvi. 20, 29). At the foot of every board were a couple of tenons, each probably about ¼ of a cubit square (Exod. xxvi. 17-20; xxxvi. 20-24).


Board to rest on sockets inserted into the ground; length of board exclusive of tenons, 10 cubits.
Board to rest on sockets placed on the ground; length of board inclusive of tenons, 10 cubits.
No. 1.
No. 2.
Scale—2-8ths of an inch to a cubit.

The length of the Tabernacle was 30 cubits, being the breadth of 20 boards, the number placed at each of the long sides. It is not so easy ascertaining its width. The internal breadth of the Temple was a third of its length, and its most holy place was square. It is almost certain that the Tabernacle corresponded to the Temple in these

respects, and if so, it was 10 cubits broad. But the west-end boards give only a breadth of 9 cubits, one too few, and if the two corner boards are added, 12 cubits, two too many. Some writers, whose conjectures I will now attempt to illustrate by diagrams, have professed to solve this difficulty, but how far they have succeeded you can judge.

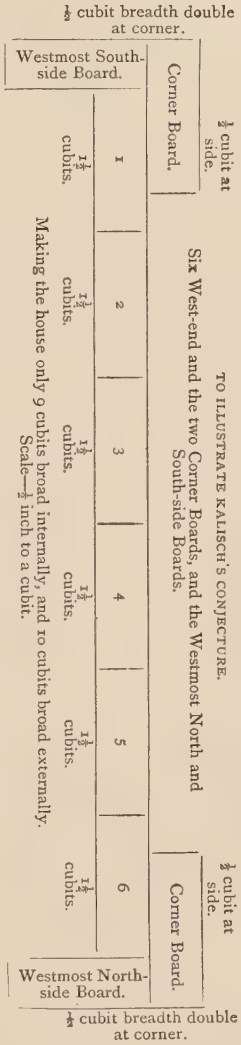


JOSEPHUS'S CONJECTURE.—"As to the wall behind where the six pillars made up together only 9 cubits, they made two other pillars, and cut them out of one cubit, which they placed in the corners." "Ant. of the Jews," B. iii. c. vi. par. 3.

Objections to this Conjecture. — 1st, whilst it gives the required breadth to the house, viz., 10 cubits, it makes the length 3 or 4 inches short of 30 cubits; 2d, the corner boards are so placed that they cannot be properly called corner boards; 3d, and chiefly, it makes the corner boards only the one-third of the breadth or size of an ordinary board, whereas the text states that the corner boards had each two tenons, and for these there were two sockets as well as for the other boards, implying that they were equal in size to the rest. The sockets were all a talent weight each.

Dr KALISCH'S CONJECTURE.—"The longer sides consisted therefore of twenty such boards, whilst the shorter (western) sides were to contain eight boards. But the latter would not cover a breadth of 10, but of 12 cubits. It is therefore added that six boards shall be made for the side westward, and other two for the corners of the Tabernacle

in the two sides, they shall be double beneath and above at the two corners." From this obscure passage it appears in our opinion that each board was half a cubit thick, so that six boards at the western end would completely close the tent from within (9 cubits added to the one-half cubit at each side, being the thickness of the boards at the northern and southern wall, make 10 cubits). One-half cubit breadth is double at each corner, and one-half cubit stands over at each side." "Commentary," p. 366.


½ cubit breadth double at corner.
Westmost South-side Board.
Corner Board.
½ cubit at side.
1½ cubits.
1
2
3
4
5
6
Six West-end and the two Corner Boards, and the Westmost North and South-side Boards.
Making the house only 9 cubits broad internally, and 10 cubits broad externally.
Scale—½ inch to a cubit.
TO ILLUSTRATE KALISCH'S CONJECTURE.
Westmost North-side Board.
½ cubit breadth double at corner.

Objections to Dr Kalisch's Conjecture.—1st, Instead of 10 cubits as required, it only gives a breadth of 9 cubits to the house within. It seems very extraordinary that whilst Dr Kalisch thinks his conjecture solves the difficulty regarding the corner boards and the size of the house, yet when he speaks about the measurement and disposition of the curtains, he bases his calculations on the internal breadth of the house being 10 cubits, and the external 11 cubits, which is quite contrary to his own conjecture (pp. 366-7); 2d, Half a cubit (9 inches) is too great a thickness for the boards.

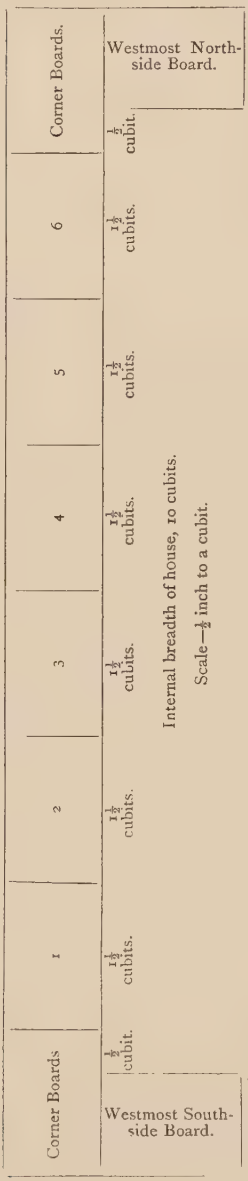
OTTO VON GERLACH'S CONJECTURE.—"That the boards were each one cubit thick." "Com. on the Pent."

This conjecture gives both the required breadth and length of the house within, which neither that of Josephus nor of Kalisch does. But the fatal objection to it is that the boards are at least three or four times too thick, and

their weight out of all proportion to that of the sockets they rested on. The weight of each such board—

	Cwt.	qrs.	lbs.
If of Acacia wood (now commonly in use), would be .	18	3	12
If of beech or ash, . .	18	1	4
If of fir or pine, . . .	9	0	0

Now, even allowing that the wood of which the Tabernacle was constructed was very light, is there the least probability that the boards would weigh about half a ton each, or even nearly as much, when the two sockets it rested on weighed only 93 lbs. 12 oz. each?



TO ILLUSTRATE GERLACH'S CONJECTURE.
Six West-end Boards, the two Corner Boards, and the Westmost North and South-side Boards.

MY OWN CONJECTURE.—I venture to hazard the following conjecture, and believe it to be better than any other that has yet been suggested as a solution of the difficulty: Thickness of boards, ¼ cubit, or 4½ inches. Shape of corner boards, angular, and consisting of two equal halves of an ordinary board dovetailed, or otherwise united together, yet so as, when united, to constitute but one board. The one-half of the south-west corner board facing the south, and the other half facing the west, and the one-half of the north-west corner board facing the north, and the other half facing the west—each corner board at the joining below and above being further bound or coupled together by a ring or staple; or the meaning of the text may be that the staple

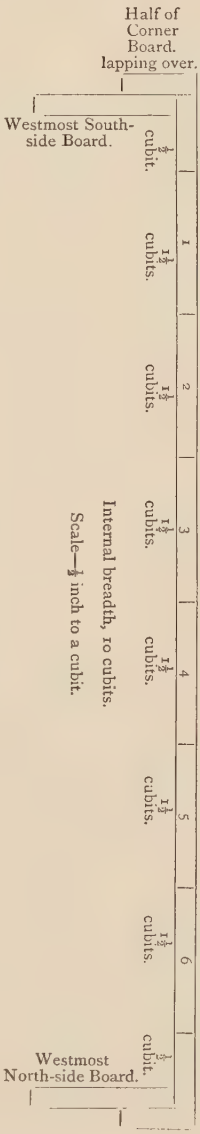
or ring joined, coupled, or bound them to the boards next them on both sides. The text is very obscure: Exod. xxvi. 23, 24, "Two boards shalt thou make for the corners; and they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled * together above the head of it into one ring,† thus shalt it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners."

Dr Kalisch's Translation.—"And they shall be double beneath, and at the same time they shall be double above at the ring; thus shalt it be for them both; they shall be for the corners."

Young's Translation.—"And they are pairs beneath, and they are pairs together, above its head unto the one ring; so is it for them both."

Septuagint.—"And two posts thou shalt make on the corners of the Tabernacle at the back, and it shall be of the same below, and towards the same part they shall be equal from the heads to one joining; so shalt thou make to both the same corners; let them be equal."

It will be observed that the half of each of the corner boards (¾ of a cubit) which faces the west, fills up the gap of ½ cubit, and laps over the thickness (¼ of a cubit) of the last south or north-side boards.

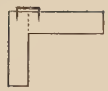


To illustrate my Conjecture: Six West-end Boards, the two Corner or Angular Boards, and Westmost South and North-side Boards.

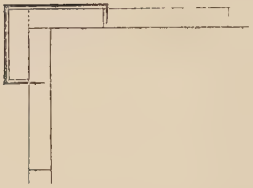
FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.

* Hebrew, "*twins.*"

† *Ring*, from a Hebrew word signifying to dip.



Ring or staple dipping into corner-board (the one prong into the one twin and the other prong into the other twin), where two halves have been joined into one board.



Ring or staple if intended to join or couple corner-boards to the boards on each side of them.

The last conjecture has the following advantages to recommend it: 1st, The internal length and breadth of the house are as required, viz., 30 cubits long and 10 cubits broad. 2d, The boards are of a reasonable thickness. 3d, The corner-boards are real corner-boards; and though one-half of each laps over the last side-boards, the symmetry of the frame-work is not thereby destroyed, as a glance at the diagram will show, while this lapping over tends to compact the structure at the corners, and makes the thickness at these important points double. These corner-boards have a double connection, viz., with the side and back walls, by which they lay hold of and bind the three walls into one, thus besides their mere position, there is a peculiar and important sense in which they differ from the other boards, and which entitle them to the name "corner-boards." 4th, The text is illustrated. There is a sense in which these corner-boards, each consisting of two halves, yet when united forming but one whole, may be called "couples," "pairs," or "twins," or which, when clasped at the foot and at the top by a ring or staple as illustrated above, may be said to have been "coupled together," and also to the boards next to them.

We have already referred to the bars, and will now notice them more particularly, with a view to illustrate the texts in which they are mentioned.

The Bars.

Texts in which mentioned.

Exod. xxvi. 26: "And thou shalt make bars of shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the Tabernacle. 27, And five for the boards of the other side of the Tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the Tabernacle, for the two sides westward. 28, And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end."

Exod. xxxvi. 33: "And he made the middle bar to shoot through the boards from the one end to the other."

It appears from the above texts that there were five rows of bars for each of the three sides of the Tabernacle. Josephus, however, while seemingly admitting that there were more rows than one along each of the long sides, says: "But for the wall behind, there was but one row of bars that went through all the pillars," but this is quite opposed to the text, which makes no distinction in this respect between the back and the two long sides.

The general opinion is that there were five bars for each of the three sides, arranged in so many rows—the middle one reaching the whole length, while the other four ran along only part of the wall, *see* No. 1, p. 26.

Mr Fergusson, the celebrated architect, holds that the middle bar was not a bar, but a ridge-pole, and on this theory he proves to his own satisfaction that the Tabernacle was a very different structure from what it is generally believed to have been. As in a subsequent chapter, this peculiar view of Mr Fergusson is discussed at some length, and as considerable diversity of opinion exists as to the disposition of the bars, particular attention is requested to the above texts, and also to the diagrams on the next page illustrating various modes of arranging the bars.

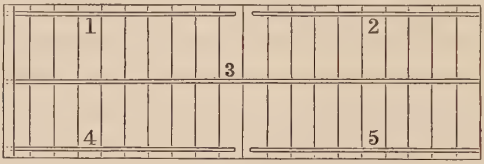
VARIOUS CONJECTURES FOR THE DISPOSITION OF THE BARS.

No. 1. The bars extending along one of the long sides of the Tabernacle.

No. 1.

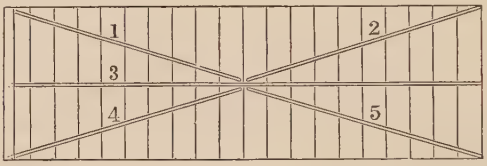
No. 2. Some are of opinion that the five bars formed three rows, the four shorter ones running half the distance—two at or near the foot, and starting from each end, and meeting at the middle of the boards; and two near the top, similarly arranged—the middle bar running the whole distance. (*See* No. 2.) The objection to this conjecture is, that no sufficient reason can be shown why, if the middle row should consist of but one bar, the other two rows should consist of two bars each.

No. 2.



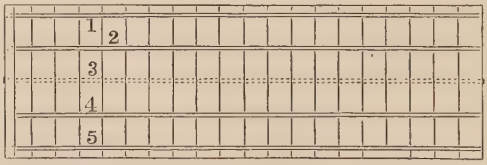
No. 3. Shows the four short bars transversing the sides, and meeting in the centre of the wall, and the middle one reaching from end to end. This may seem to agree with the text, but it removes the bars from the foot and the top of the boards, while the top especially may be supposed to require a bar.

No. 3.



No. 4. Is intended to represent the middle bar as passing through the heart of the boards, which have been morticed for this purpose to admit of its passing through them. The other four bars run along the outside. We do not think the text implies that the four bars run

No. 4.

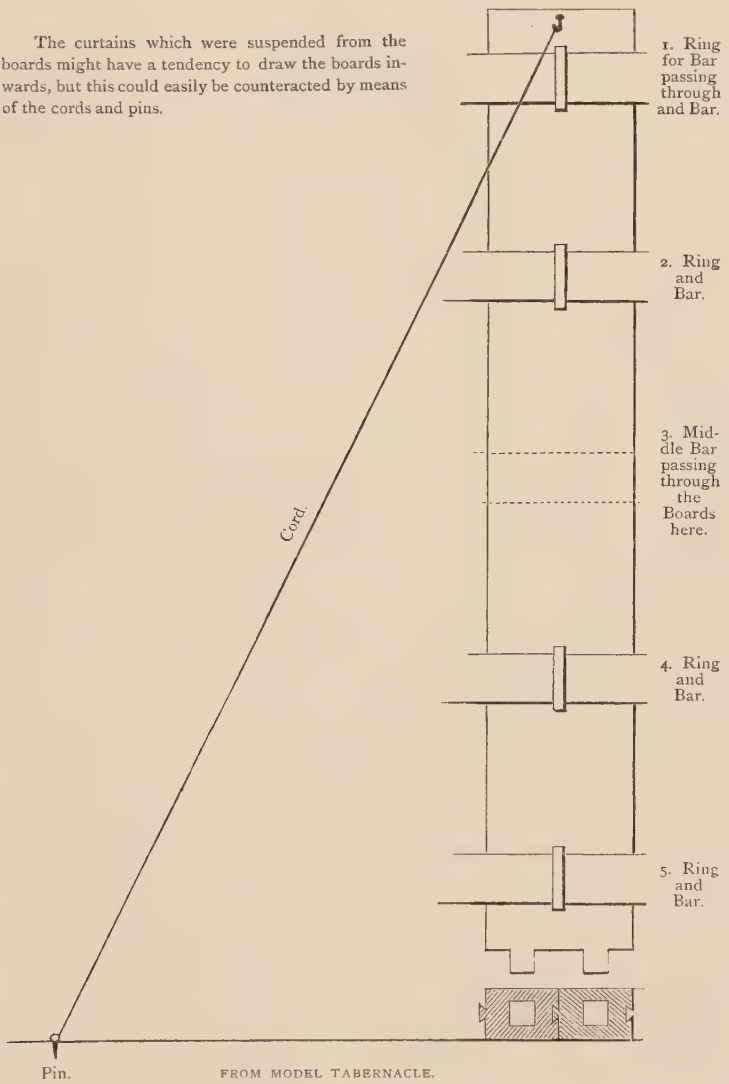


along only part of the wall, but that the middle bar entered in at the one end of the wall, and passing through the heart or inside of the boards, reached to the other end, and that the other four bars extended along the walls on the outside. This view appears to be in harmony with the text.

Board intended to rest in Sockets placed on the ground; length including that of the projections or tenons 10 cubits, breadth 1½ cubits.

Scale ½ inch to a cubit.

The curtains which were suspended from the boards might have a tendency to draw the boards inwards, but this could easily be counteracted by means of the cords and pins.


1. Ring for Bar passing through and Bar.
2. Ring and Bar.
3. Middle Bar passing through the Boards here.
4. Ring and Bar.
5. Ring and Bar.
Cord.
Pin.

FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.

FROM MODEL.

1. Capital.
2. Shaft.
3. Tenon.
4. Socket.
5. Hole in Socket for Tenon.

The Pillars.

At the distance of 20 cubits from the entrance of the habitation, and 10 cubits from the back wall, stood four pillars, overlaid with gold, and resting on silver sockets. (*See* Diagram of Sockets.) They, with the vail that was suspended from them, divided the Holy Place, or the first apartment on entering, from the Holy of Holies, or innermost apartment. Hooks or pegs were inserted in the silver sockets to which the vail was attached, and by this means kept firmly down. At the top it was suspended from the fillet or rod that connected the tops or capitals of the pillars (Exod. xxxvi. 36-38).

At the entrance of the Tabernacle stood five similar pillars, which, with the hanging they bore up, formed the door of the sanctuary. These five pillars rested on brazen sockets (Exod. xxvi. 36-37).

The silver sockets comprising the foundation of the Tabernacle, and the various parts composing the golden frame-work that rested on it, having now been illustrated in detail, a kind of bird's-eye view of the whole of these together is given in the next page by means of diagrams.

DIAGRAMS

Illustrating all the Boards, Bars, Rings, Sockets, and Pillars of the Tabernacle. Rings, Tenons, and Sockets indicated by square and oblong dots.

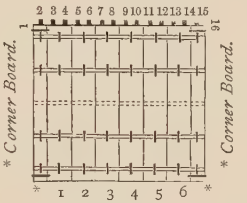
EXODUS XXVI. 15-30.

THEIR SOCKETS SIXTEEN

(for the six west end and two corner boards).

The sixteen tenons at the end of the boards.

Ring or staple at foot and at the top, coupling or twining the corner boards together, or to those on each side of them.



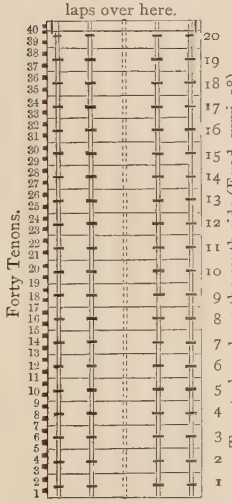
Numbers 1 and 16 tenons seen at side ends.

Two boards for the corners (Exod. xxvi. 23).

Sides of the Tabernacle westward six boards.

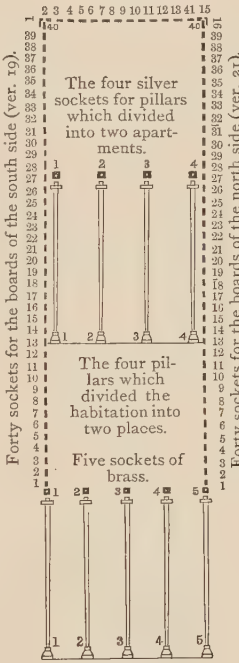
Exod. xxvi. 25: Sixteen sockets for the six west end and two corner boards.

Half of corner board laps over here.



Exod. xxvi. 26.

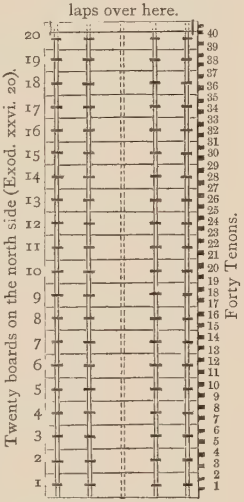
The three walls are represented as lying on their sides.


2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 41 15
Forty sockets for the boards of the south side (ver. 19).
Forty sockets for the boards of the north side (ver. 21).
The four silver sockets for pillars which divided into two apartments.
The four pillars which divided the habitation into two places.
Five sockets of brass.
1 2 3 4 5

The five pillars at the entrance of the habitation for the door hanging.

FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.

Half of corner board laps over here.



Exod. xxvi. 26, 27.

These diagrams will help to illustrate the preceding remarks about the framework. Its three walls are supposed to have been raised from their foundations, and laid flat on their sides, by which you are enabled to see all the boards, tenons, bars, rings, and staples. These are all numbered, or otherwise indicated. The sockets are indicated by dots, and describe the ground plan. In imagination raise the three walls, bring them to the ground plan, place the tenons in their respective places (sockets), and rear up the pillars, and the eye of your mind will have presented to it a model of the framework.

As you look at these diagrams, read Exodus xxvi. 15-37; xxxvi. 20-38; xl. 18, and you will find all that is said there respecting the framework and all its parts, illustrated by them.

The next illustration is a perspective view taken from the model of the framework of the Tabernacle. With respect to this model (made on the scale of 1 inch to a cubit), it may be mentioned here that though composed, like the original, of 105 sockets, 48 boards with their 96 tenons or projections, 15 bars, and 9 pillars with their 9 tenons, these can all be easily put together, and as easily separated again into single articles. The model sockets (made of metal) when set in their places and dovetailed together have a stronger and more compact character than one would be apt to suppose from merely reading about them. The model boards when placed in their respective sockets, and girt about with the successive rows of bars, and especially the middle one, which passes through the heart of the boards, stand very firmly, like a solid wall, helping us to realise how great the solidity of the original structure must have been, though it was but a portable temple, and could with great facility be taken to pieces and again compactly built together.

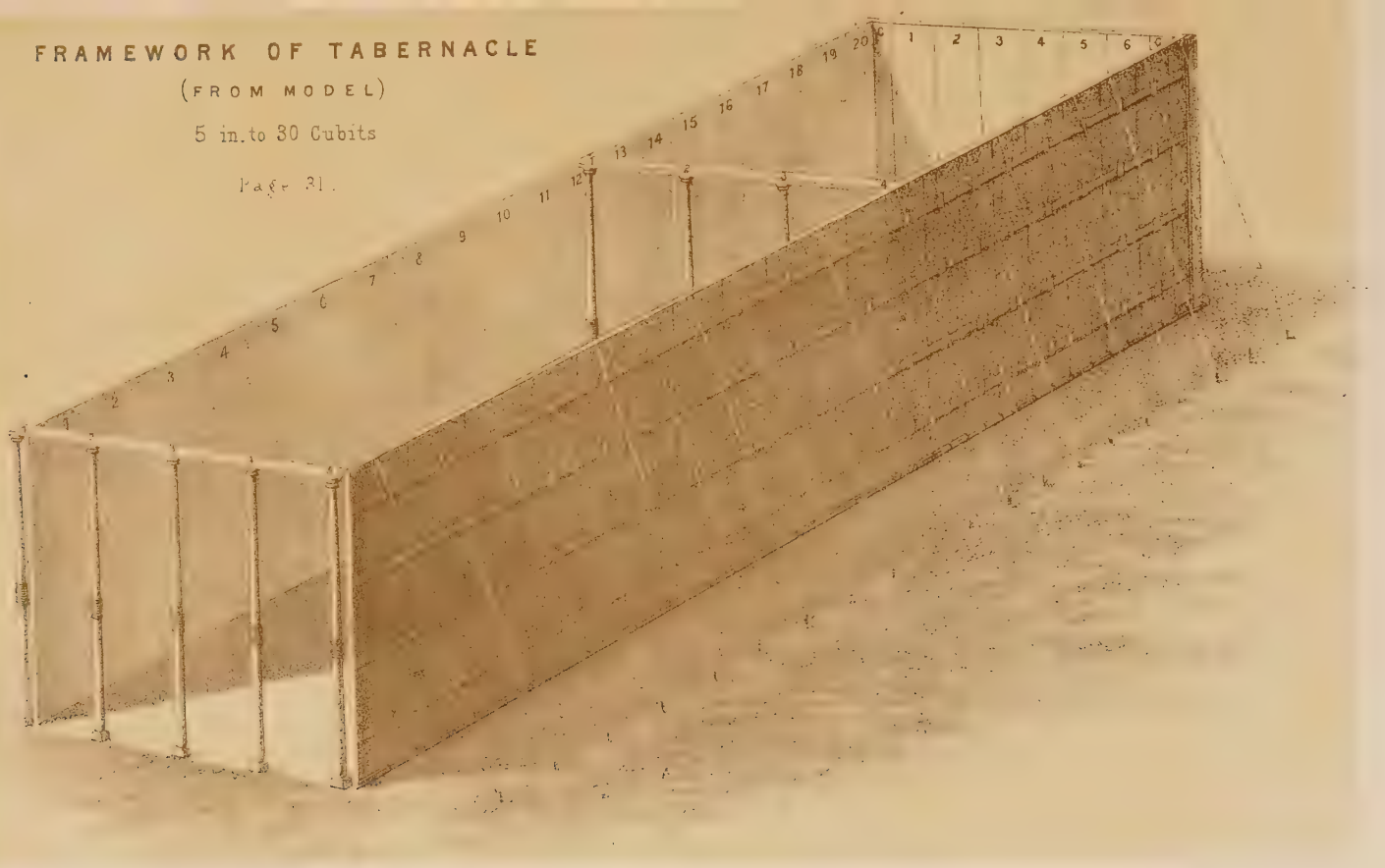
The many golden members of this edifice, all fitly framed together, and resting on the lovely silver foundation, must have had a very beautiful appearance.

FRAMEWORK OF TABERNACLE

(FROM MODEL)

5 in. to 30 Cubits

Page 31.



You have now the completed framework of the Tabernacle before you. Its golden boards are planted in their silver sockets, and stand erect. Through the gold rings which apparently grow out of the walls pass golden bars, which encircle and bind all the boards together. The corner boards form a right angle; one-half of each of these belong to the side, and the other half to the back wall, by which means the corners of the structure are strengthened; and further, by means of a ring or staple at the foot, and another at the top, they clasp to, or unite with, the last end and the last side boards, and through them with all the other boards. The four golden pillars you see reared within the framework await the vail, which is to be suspended from them; and the five golden pillars at the threshold are those which await the hanging for the door of the tent.

A few words now on some points of analogy between this framework and the Church, will close this chapter.

Tenons.

Although thousands and tens of thousands are now resting on the rock laid in Zion, it is able to bear the weight of countless millions more, and can never by any possibility be over-burdened. Those, however, who would build on it, must do so in the way pointed out in the Scripture, or it will not avail them. It was by means of the tenons that the boards took hold of, and rested on, the silver bases. The Hebrew word for "tenon" is "hand;" and is not faith the hand that takes hold of the Saviour? Remember that the boards required to be not merely *on*, but *in*, their respective sockets, or they would not have been upheld. In like manner sinners, in order to be saved, must not only be on, but in, the spiritual foundation. Unless they are by faith rooted in Christ Jesus as the boards by their tenons were rooted in the ransom money, they cannot stand.

Are you, dear friend, by faith resting on Jesus, the only resting-place for poor sinners? If not, come to Him without delay. Come now. By faith stretch forth your hands,

and take hold of Him. Trust all to Him. "He is able to save, even unto the uttermost, all who come unto God by Him." If, by the grace of God, you are one of those who are already standing on this Rock of Ages, stand there, stand fast. In this is your safety. There standing you can never fall; but you are safe nowhere else. On any other standing ground you shall sink, and be ruined for ever.

"Strangers, pilgrims, here below,
Travelling to fair Canaan's land;
Lean on Jesus, as ye go,
For by faith alone ye stand.

"Glory in the Saviour's name,
Join with all the ransom'd band;
Trust the Lord, He's still the same,
For by faith alone ye stand.

"Trust the Lord in life and death,
Trust your all in Jesus' hand;
Trust Him with your latest breath,
For by faith alone ye stand."

Bars.

Look now at the golden bars, as they run along the sides, taking hold of each board, and clasping them all together, and helping, along with the sockets, to bear them up; so, all who stand in Christ Jesus, and because they are in Him, are sustained on every side by strong supporting bands, yea, Almighty ones, for, like the golden bars around the sacred tent, the everlasting arms are around the people of God. The mutual love of believers tends also to bind them together, and that is a strong band. Paul could scarcely find words adequately to describe its strength, when he exclaimed, "God is my record; how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ!" And in heaven, as well as on earth, the saints are cemented and bound together by this grace; for:

"Love's the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above."

The Boards.

The boards which stood in the ransom money shone with pure gold—the brightness of which, no doubt, bore some resemblance to the bright flame called the Shekinah; but those who stand in Christ, resemble not the mere symbol of God's presence, but the Holy One of Israel Himself: they shine with the beauty of holiness.

Pillars.

These are beautiful and important parts of a structure. They are graceful and yet strong supports. Those of the tabernacle helped to sustain the roof, and the vails were suspended from them. Eminent saints are said to be pillars of the house of God, for they are her ornaments and chief props. With few exceptions, those who enlisted early in the Master's service have been the Church's brightest ornaments.

If you know that your hopes of heaven and everlasting blessedness rest on a sure foundation; if you feel the loving arms of your Heavenly Father, and those of many brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus encircling you; and if in some degree you are shining with the beauty of holiness, forget not that you owe all to Him who loved you, and gave Himself for you. May the love of Christ, therefore, constrain you to live not unto yourselves, but unto Him who died for you, and rose again.

If you are so living, it may be said of you, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

CHAPTER V.

THE CURTAINS AND COVERINGS.

THE curtains, skins, and boards composing the portable temple, as a whole, are called the "Tabernacle," but when spoken of separately, the cherub curtains by themselves are called the "Tabernacle" (Exod. xxvi. 1, 7, 12); the goats' hair curtains the "tent" (verses 7, 11, 13); the skins the "coverings" (v. 14); and the boards not the "Tabernacle," but the "boards for the Tabernacle" (verse 15). *See* also Exod. xxxv. 10, 11; xxxvi. 13; and Numb. iii. 25, 36. All the above parts, you will observe, are described in the text (Exod. xxvi. 1-16) in the order of their relative importance—thus: First, the cherub curtains; then, second, the goats' hair ones, being a tent above and over the former, and hanging between them and the boards; then, third, the two sets of skins forming a two-fold covering or roof; and then, fourth and last, the boards which were made for the curtains and skins, and not the curtains and skins for them. In order that the goats' hair curtains might be a tent over the cherub ones, in accordance with Exod. xxvi. 6, 7, the former would need to be first suspended from the boards, and then the latter; or the goats' hair curtains, before being hung, would require to be spread over, and fastened to the cherub curtains (the Tabernacle), and then both these together attached

to the boards, their support. Both sets being in two grand divisions would facilitate the work, and there being no lack of Levites to render assistance, would render the operation comparatively easy.

The cherub curtains being those which were visible in the interior, are appropriately called the Tabernacle (or habitation). The goats' hair ones constituted the "tent," the cherub curtains being the gorgeous tapestry that adorned its walls and ceilings, the skins being its roof, and the frame-work of boards its stay. Trusting that you will bear these distinctions in mind, I will now attempt, with the assistance of numerous diagrams, to describe the curtains and skins in detail.

The Cherub Curtains.

These were very costly and splendid. The warp or foundation was of the finest pure white linen yarn, and the waft of blue purple and scarlet thread. Figures of cherubs were interwoven by skilful weavers. The ancient Egyptians wove cloth of this description, which can be proved from paintings on the tomb walls of Egypt, and on some of the finer specimens of mummy wrappings.

There were 10 of these very rich curtains woven, each four cubits broad and 28 cubits long.

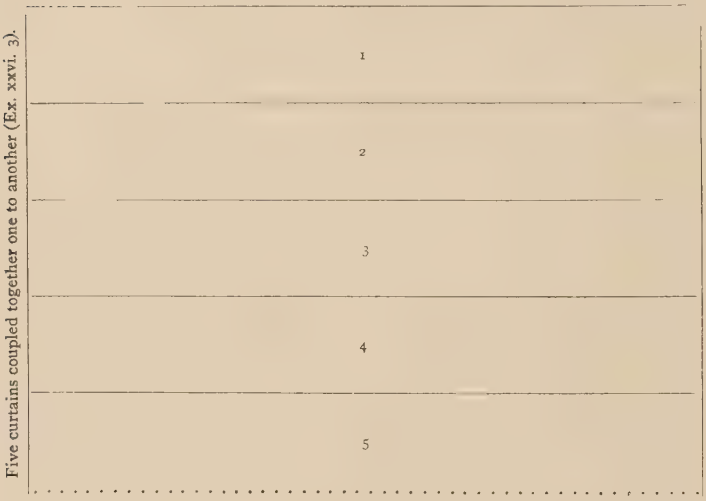
FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.

Scale—$\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch to a cubit.

Five of these curtains were joined one to another by needlework, and the other five in like manner, forming two great curtains, which were united together after being hung up, for which purpose 50 loops of blue were sewed along the edges of the two great curtains where the junction was

DIAGRAMS OF THE TWO GREAT CHERUB CURTAINS

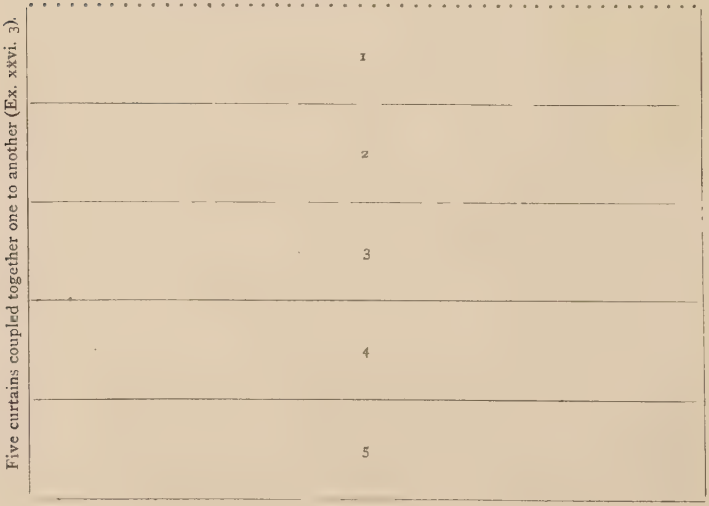
OF FIVE SINGLE CURTAINS EACH.



Fifty loops of blue upon the edge of the curtain (Exod. xxvi. 4, 5).

Dots intended to represent the loops of blue.

Fifty loops of blue upon the edge of the curtain (Exod. xxvi. 4, 5).



FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.

effected. The loops took hold of each other, and were kept firmly locked together by means of golden taches.

The curtains were placed lengthways across the roof, and down the side walls; but, as the wall on each side was 10 cubits high, and the roof 10 cubits broad (in all 30 cubits), and as the curtains were only 28 cubits long, it follows that they did not quite reach to the ground, but to within a cubit of it on both sides. (*See* diagrams, p. 39.)

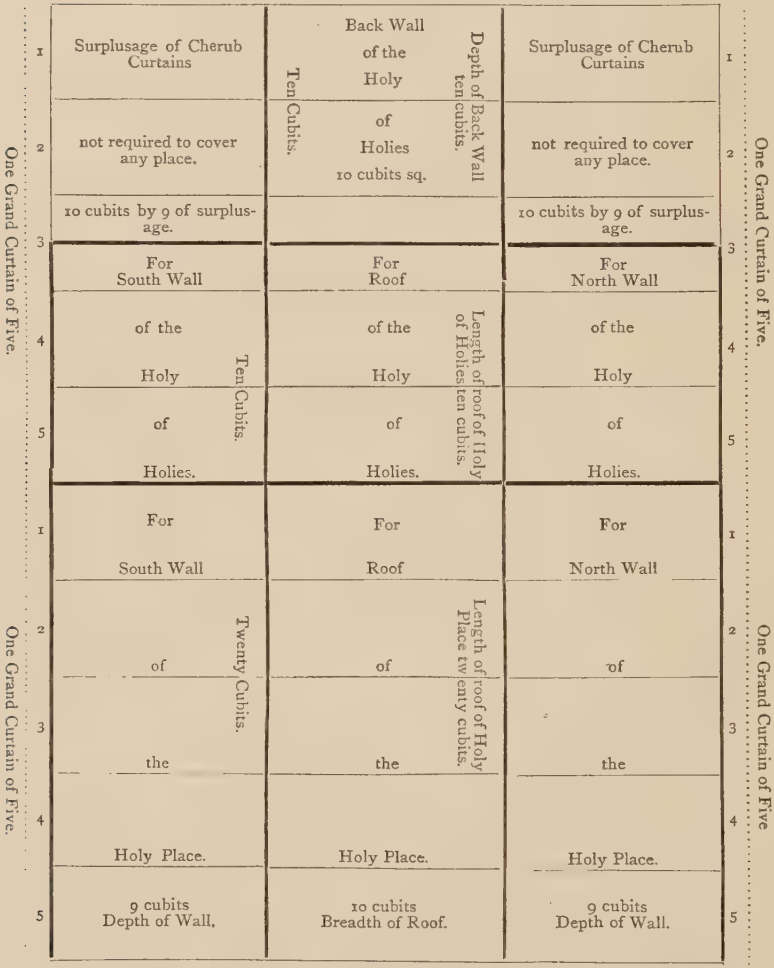
There were ten of these curtains, each 4 cubits broad, in all 40 cubits, which was the exact length required to stretch along the roof of the holy place (20 cubits), the holy of holies (10 cubits), and to hang down the back wall (10 cubits). Yet, notwithstanding this apparent agreement between the size of the frame-work and the curtains, there is a large surplusage, and one not mentioned in the text, thus: The first grand division of five curtains, as you will see from the diagram, p. 38, spanned the roof, and hung down the north and south walls of the holy place; the half of the other great curtain spanned the roof, and hung down the north and south walls of the most holy place; and the third part of the remaining half was sufficient, as you will see from diagram, p. 38, to hang down the back wall, leaving a surplusage measuring no less than 18 cubits by 10 (or two pieces each 10 cubits by 9). *See* page 41, where this surplusage is again taken notice of.

The Goats' Hair Curtains.

These, of which there were eleven, one more than there were of the cherub ones, were manufactured of "goats' hair," the usual material for tents in the East. Each curtain was four cubits broad, the same as the cherub ones, but the length of each was 30 cubits, 2 cubits more than the others. Five curtains were joined together, and six curtains were joined together, forming two great curtains, which were united in the same manner as the cherub grand curtains already described. The hooks or taches, however, were of brass, while those of the finer curtains were of gold.

DIAGRAM OF THE TEN CHERUB CURTAINS,

Showing how much was required to cover the walls and ceiling of the Tabernacle, and how much was left over.



FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.

Scale—1-8th of an inch to a cubit.

The quantity required for ceiling and walls marked off with black lines.

Surplusage of two pieces, each 10 cubits by 9, shown.

Dotted lines indicate the ground, and show that these curtains reached to within a cubit on both sides.

The goats' hair curtains, as already mentioned, were 30 cubits long, and as they, like the cherub ones, were placed lengthways across the roof and down the side-walls, they exactly reached to the ground on both sides, as it was meet they should do, since they constituted the "tent" proper. But for their being two cubits longer than the cherub curtains, they would have been entirely concealed within the house, but these two additional cubits in their length allows of a cubit of the "tent" or goats' hair curtains being left uncovered, and consequently exposed to view at the foot of the cherub curtains; and, if the material was of the fine silky nature (p. 7) we have alluded to, would appear as a beautiful white pannelling on both sides of the habitation, and would tend to set off to advantage the gorgeously adorned cherub curtains, being the rich tapestry that covered the roof and walls. This is evidently the two cubits alluded to in Exod. xxvi. 13—"a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side, of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the Tabernacle (cherub curtains) on this side and on that side, to cover it."

DIAGRAM OF ONE GOATS' HAIR CURTAIN, AND ONE CHERUB CURTAIN.

FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.

GOATS' HAIR CURTAIN.

Part for South Wall. 10 cubits.	Part for Roof. 10 cubits.	Part for North Wall. 10 cubits.

In all 30 cubits, and reaching to the ground on both sides (Exod. xxvi. 8).

CHERUB CURTAIN.

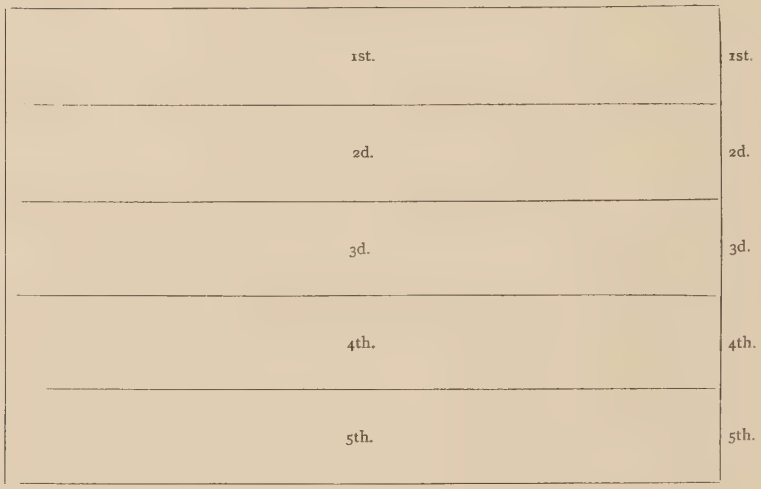
1 cubit.	Part for South Wall. 9 cubits.	Part for Roof. 10 cubits.	Part for North Wall. 9 cubits.	1 cubit.

In all 28 cubits (Exod. xxvi. 2), and consequently one cubit at each side short of reaching the ground. Scale 1-8th of an inch to a cubit. Dotted lines indicate the ground.

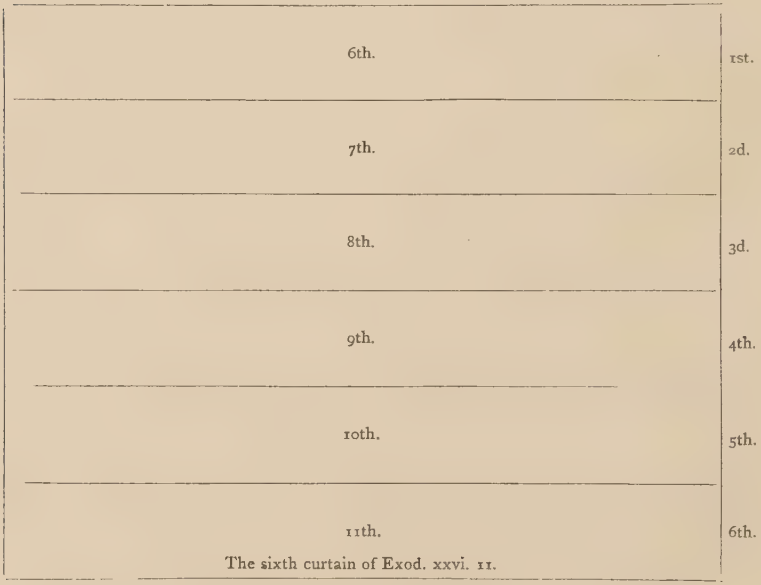
DIAGRAM OF TWO GREAT GOATS' HAIR CURTAINS:

ONE CONSISTING OF FIVE CURTAINS, AND THE OTHER OF SIX.

FROM MODEL TABERNACLE.



Loops indicated in Cherub Curtain, p. 36.



The sixth curtain of Exod. xxvi. 11.

Scale—1-8th of an inch to a cubit.

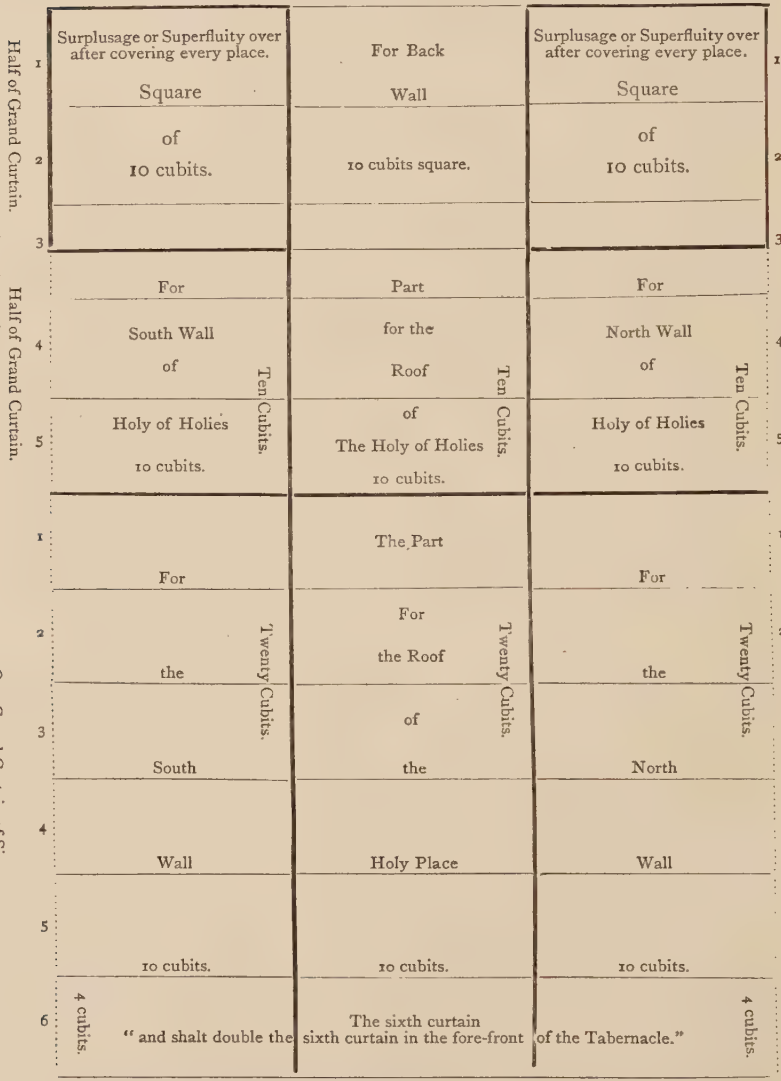
The sixth curtain of the grand division of six, we are told in verse 9, was doubled up in the forefront of the tabernacle. Some are of opinion that only the half of this curtain was so used, and that the half curtain mentioned in verse 12 arose from this circumstance. Dr Kalisch, who supports this view, tells us that the half of that curtain was used up by the thickness of the boards at the back end, and that the other half of it (one cubit) lay on the ground, which it would undoubtedly require to do, according to his theory; but the text is quite opposed to this, for it says that that half curtain (verse 12) hung down the back side. Dr Kalisch calls in the aid of Josephus, but, in turning up the passage* to which he refers, strange to say, the Jewish historian does not endorse the Doctor's opinion, but plainly states that the whole, and not the half, of the sixth curtain of verse 9 was used as a triangular fore-front. The five curtains of the grand division of six spanned the roof, and hung down the walls of the holy place, being the exact measure required; the half of the other grand division of five curtains spanned the roof, and hung down the walls of the most holy place; and the remaining half of this great curtain (may this not be the half curtain of verse 12?) hung down the back wall, being the exact length required to reach to the ground, yet leaving a large surplusage, as indicated in the diagram. Dr Kalisch tells us that the half of this grand division of five curtains hung down the back wall, but ignores the fact that one-third of it was sufficient for the purpose; and, while at pains attempting to solve lesser difficulties, finds it convenient to take no notice whatever of the superfluous two-thirds, measuring no less than 10 ft. by 20, nor of the corresponding surplusage of 10 ft. by 18 in the cherub curtains, and yet he affirms that he has solved all the difficulties arising out of the apparent discrepancy between the measurement of the wooden frame-work and the curtains. He, however, has solved none of them.

Otto Von Gerlach, in speaking of the goats' hair curtains,

* Ant. B. iii. chap. 6, par. 4.

DIAGRAM OF THE ELEVEN GOATS' HAIR CURTAINS.

Illustrating the preceding remarks, and showing One Grand Curtain of Five* used for the roof and walls of the holy place, the half of another grand curtain used for the roof and side walls of the Holy of Holies, and the third of the other half hanging down back wall.



Dotted lines indicate the ground on both sides, and show that the Goats' Hair Curtains reached to the ground. Scale 1-8th inch to a cubit.

* And leaving a surplusage or superfluity of two squares, each 10 cubits by 10, and which surplusage is not taken into account by most writers. The surplusage marked off by black lines.

is not blind, like Dr Kalisch, to this great surplusage, but, nevertheless, passes by this mountain of difficulty very lightly, by merely remarking that the half of this great curtain of five hung down the back wall in folds, implying that the superfluity was used up by this means. A very easy mode of getting quit of it.

It is best to admit, that I am not able to solve the difficulties arising out of the half curtain of verse 12, nor satisfactorily to dispose of the large surplusages in both sets of curtains, but no one else, as yet, appears to have accomplished these tasks.

Mr Fergusson, the celebrated architect, in an article in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, p. 1451, asserts that he has solved all the difficulties which have troubled former restorers; but, as will be shown you, while his sloping-roofed tabernacle effectually uses up the entire curtains, it gives rise to a very large deficiency, besides creating other difficulties much greater than those which he attempts to solve.

The Covering of Rams' Skins.

These skins, after being tanned, were dyed red, and probably resembled the red leather still sold in Syrian towns, page 7. They did not form the ceiling, nor hang down the inside walls, but, with the badgers' skins, formed a two-fold roof. I am not sure whether or not they hung down the outside walls as well; if they did, then there would be a two-fold ceiling, and two-fold curtain walls within, and a two-fold roof and two-fold skin covering without, over the boards. But I am of opinion that the skins merely formed the roof, and were attached by pins to the tops of the boards. If this had a tendency to draw the boards inwards, it would be counterbalanced by means of the cords and pins.

The Covering of Badgers' Skins.

As remarked before, page 8, it is agreed that "badger" is not the proper rendering of the original word, but whatever animal is intended, it must have had a very strong

hide, as the leather made of it was used for the outermost covering, or roof of the Tabernacle. The colour of the leather, according to the general opinion, was blue.

The Second or Inner Vail.

This vail divided the sanctuary into two apartments, and was made of the same very rich material as the fine linen curtains, and, like them, had figures of cherubs interwoven. Though made of blue and purple and scarlet and white linen yarn, probably blue predominated in the inner vail, as it was the type of the visible heavens through which our Great High Priest passed into the true holy of holies. It was suspended from rods, which rested on the four pillars that were made for it (Exod. xxvi. 31-35).

The First Vail,

(Being the Hanging for the Door of the Tent).

This vail was hung, in the same manner as the inner one, from five pillars which stood at the entrance of the Tabernacle, and formed the door of the habitation. It was inferior to the other vail, not being woven or adorned with figures of cherubs, yet it was of fine material, and embroidered with blue and purple and scarlet yarn (verses 36, 37).

The aim of this chapter has been to describe the curtains and coverings, in conformity with the text, which requires the cherub curtains to be so hung as to be visible within the sanctuary ; the goats' hair curtains to be so hung as to be a tent upon the Tabernacle (cherub curtains) ; the skins to be so placed as to be a covering or roof to the Tabernacle (cherub curtains) and the tent (goats' hair curtains), and all these so arranged as to be supported by the framework of boards, which rested on the silver sockets.

Many able writers, who admit that the text and sense show that the cherub curtains must have hung within, maintain that the goats' hair ones hung without. Dr

Kalisch, in supporting this view, says, that if the goats' hair curtains had hung within, the golden boards would have been entirely concealed, but by hanging them without, admitted of a cubit being exposed to view on both sides, viz., the space left uncovered reaching from the cherub curtains to the ground. I have little doubt that this was not the case, but that the boards, being merely the support of the two sets of curtains, were entirely concealed within, but entirely exposed to view on the outside. Dr Kalisch, by placing the boards between the two set of curtains, destroys the sense of Exod. xxvi. 13, which plainly says, that a cubit of goats' hair curtains hung over the sides, not of the boards, but of the Tabernacle (cherub curtains), at both the north and south walls, "to cover it," the uncovered space at the foot of the cherub curtains, and which was the exact measure required for the purpose, but there were no such corresponding blank spaces on the outside of the boards for a cubit of curtain on this side and on that, to cover. Further, if the goats' hair curtains had hung over the outside of the wooden frame-work, they would have been a "tent" upon the "boards," and not one upon the "Tabernacle" (the cherub curtains), as the text requires (Exod. xxvi. 1, 7, 13).

It cannot be urged, as an objection to the golden boards being uncovered on the outside, that they would not stand exposure to the weather, since the same might be said of the five golden pillars at the entrance to the habitation, and if not of the court pillars, at least of their ornamental capitals and connecting rods, which were overlaid with silver.

The golden boards seem to bear the same relation to the curtains and coverings as the court pillars did to the linen hangings which were suspended from them. Both boards and pillars being subordinate to the curtains and hangings.

Mr Fergusson maintains that the Tabernacle had a sloping roof, the dimensions of which were commensurate with the curtains, and of course, leaving no such surplusage

as that indicated in diagrams, pages 38 and 42 ; before, however, examining his arguments in favour of a sloping roof, let us look for a little at those by which he attempts to demolish a flat one.

First, He says, "The tent had a ridge as all tents from the days of Moses down to the present time have had." This is a mere assertion, which has not a single passage of Scripture to support it. It may be true of tents in general, but it does not follow that this portable temple must in this and every other respect have resembled them. The text gives the most minute particulars of the curtains, skins, boards, and pillars, and even of the loops, taches, hooks, and pins ; but not a single word or hint is given in it about a ridge pole and its supports, both of which are involved in a sloping roof.

Second, Mr Fergusson asserts that the arrangement of the curtains (for a flat roof) is in direct contradiction to the Scriptures. We are told there, he says (Exod. xxvi. 9), "that half of one of the goats' hair curtains shall be doubled back in front of the Tabernacle, and only the half of another (ver. 12) hung down behind, and (ver. 13) that one cubit shall hang down on each side, whereas, this arrangement makes 10 cubits hang down all around, except in front." In reply to this, observe (1) Exod. xxvi. 3 does not say that a half, but a whole curtain, was doubled in the fore-front of the Tabernacle ; (2) Ten cubits of cherub curtains hanging down the sides is not inconsistent with the text, the object of which is to explain what was done with the two additional cubits in the length of the goats' hair curtains, and which says, that one cubit of these, at both sides, shall hang over the sides of the Tabernacle (cherub curtains), and so covering the blank space between the foot of these cherub curtains and the ground. If the cubit on each side hung, according to Mr Fergusson's theory, as a fringe, it would cover no defined space, and hence not agree with the text, which distinctly states that it was used for a covering.

Third, Mr Fergusson tells us, that "Every drop of rain falling on the Tabernacle would fall through." It had a fourfold roof, (1) the linen curtains ; (2) the goats' hair ones, which were impervious to the rain ; (3) the rams' skins, of which, moreover, Mr Fergusson says, "with the wool on, and when wet, would depress the centre ;" but he has no scriptural authority for this statement, and the probability is, that the wool was off (*see* pp. 7, 8) ; and (4), the badgers' skins. How could every drop of rain fall through such a roof as this ? "However tightly," Mr Ferguson says, "the curtains might be stretched, the water would never run over the edge." The breadth to be spanned was only 15 feet, and there was nothing to prevent the skin coverings from being so stretched as to render the roof quite flat, and to admit of rain running over the edges. I have stretched a piece of waterproof cloth across a model tabernacle, fastening it down to the tops of the boards, and have both rained and poured water upon it, and not a single drop fell through. The most of the water ran over the edges, a little was left on it owing to its level surface; which, likely, would be the case with respect to the Tabernacle in the wilderness when it rained, were there no simple contrivance to run it off ; but before what might be left on the roof could penetrate through the fourfold covering, would it not be absorbed by the atmosphere of a thirsty land—"a land of drought, where there was no water ?" (Deut. viii. 15 ; Jer. ii. 6.)

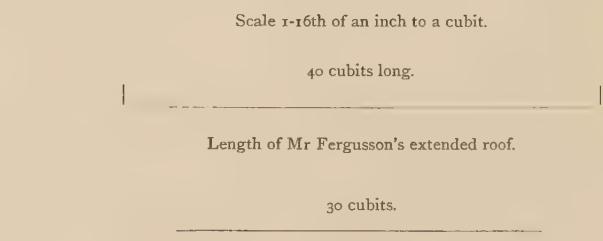
Fourth, Mr Fergusson, not content with having every drop of rain falling through a flat roof, adds, "while snow falling on such a roof would certainly tear it to pieces." Admitting that snow sometimes falls on the mountains of Sinai, it seldom if ever falls in the wadies and plains; and if slight showers ever do occur, they must be like angels' visits, few and far between. None of the many authors I have followed across the desert of wandering seem ever to have witnessed snow, and very rarely even rain. The Israelites, who were in the habit of complaining of privations, never once complained of snow-storms. In the midst

of snow-falling, it must have been very difficult to distinguish or gather the manna that fell every morning. But, granting that snow did fall occasionally, would the 8000 able-bodied Levites, who camped around the Tabernacle, and whose duty it was to care for the sacred structure, not be able to remove what might alight on the roof, by unfastening the covering, and shaking it off, or even by some more easy method.

Fifth, All tents having had ridges from the days of Moses, every drop of rain falling through the flat roof, and snow tearing it to pieces, one would think were sufficient to completely demolish it; but no, Mr Fergusson has another weapon in reserve, viz., the middle bar (Exod. xxvi. 28), with which he deals it its death-blow; that blow, however, will be considered presently.

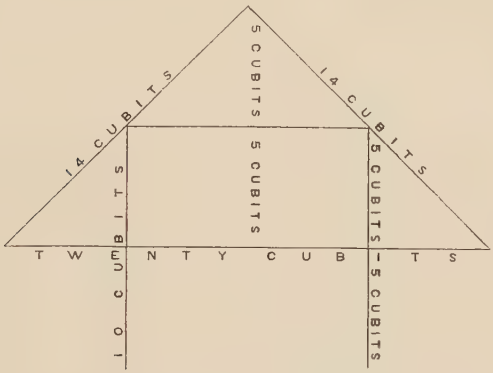
Having now witnessed the wished-for wreck of the flat roof, let me ask your particular attention to the sloping one Mr Fergusson raises on its ruins.

He asserts that the Tabernacle had a sloping roof; that the middle bar (Exod. xxvi. 28; xxxvi. 33) was its ridge-pole; that the linen and goats' hair curtains did not hang down the walls, either on the inside or the outside, but with the skins, formed the roof only which extended 5 cubits beyond the walls, not only in front and rear, but on both sides.


Scale 1-16th of an inch to a cubit.
40 cubits long.
Length of Mr Fergusson's extended roof.
30 cubits.
Length of Tabernacle Frame-work.

The length of this extended roof is 40 cubits, and the depth of each of its slopes, 14 cubits (together, 28 cubits),

being the exact measurement of the cherub curtains, so that the two slopes of Mr Fergusson's roof, and the dimensions of the curtains, agree.



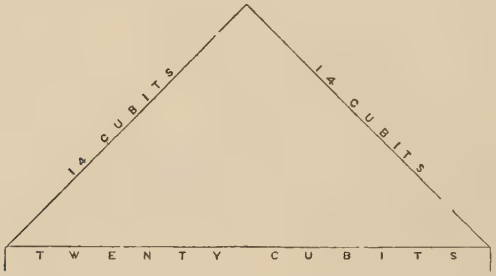
Section showing sloping roof; each slope 14 cubits deep.

Scale 1-8th of an inch to a cubit.

There were eleven of the goats' hair curtains, one more than there were of the fine linen ones. Mr Fergusson says the half (although the text says the whole) of this additional curtain was doubled up in the fore-front of the Tabernacle, the other half, about a yard, hanging down as a fringe behind. These curtains were also two cubits longer than the linen ones, and were placed lengthways down the sloping roof, a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side, hanging over the cherub curtains, as on page 50.

The ridge-pole, according to Mr Fergusson, was supported at the east end, on the middle pillar at the entrance to the habitation, and at the west end, on the middle board, which, he tells us, was raised 5 cubits above its fellows for this purpose (and which, he says, there is nothing to contradict), and also on a pillar situated 5 cubits beyond the west wall, where, he informs us, there "was at least one pillar; there may have been five." Only half of the curtains, Mr Fergusson informs us, were used within, the other

half, on the outside, formed the ceiling of verandahs on every side of the erection. The front verandah, not being inclosed, constituted the porch; and the side and back ones, probably being inclosed, were used as cloisters for the priests.



Section showing cubit of goats' hair curtains hanging over cherub curtains, according to Mr Fergusson's roof.

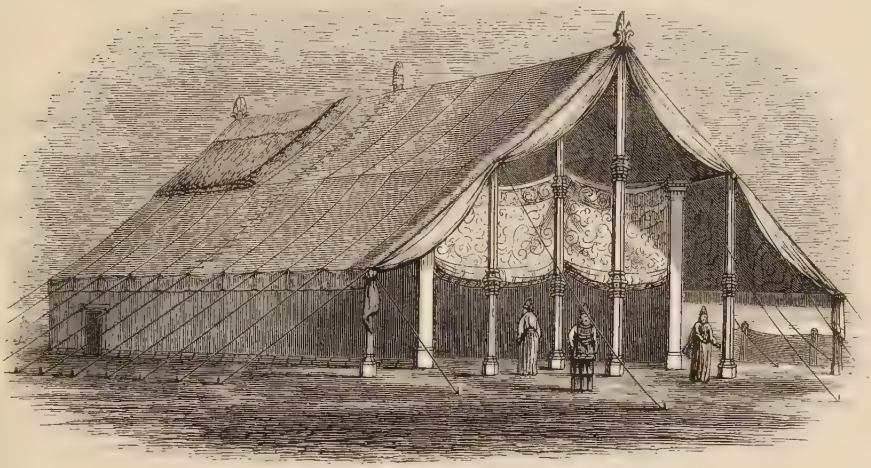
Scale 1-8th of an inch to a cubit.

Such, then, is a brief outline of Mr Fergusson's proposed restoration of the Tabernacle; and I shall now apply to it the test of Scripture, and especially so, as Mr Fergusson maintains that it is in strict conformity with every word, and every indication, of the sacred text.

OBJECTIONS TO MR FERGUSSON'S RESTORATION OF THE TABERNACLE.

First, The text does not furnish the ridge pole. It is easy for Mr Fergusson to say (in order that he may find a pole) "five rows of bars are quite unnecessary, besides being in opposition to the words of the text." Nothing, however, which he advances proves this assertion. Both texts in which the bars are mentioned (Exod. xxvi. 28; xxxvi. 33) plainly teach that there were five bars, arranged in so many rows. The middle bar is evidently one of these five, for it is not named till after they are noticed, and then, it is not

said, Thou shalt make a middle bar, but, "the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end." Five bars in so many rows, then, is according to the text.



MR FERGUSSON'S TABERNACLE AS RESTORED.

As to five rows being unnecessary, I have only to say, that if one row tended to compact the boards, five rows would do so more effectually.

Mr Fergusson trys to get Josephus to help him to turn this middle bar into a ridge-pole. He quotes for this purpose the following paragraph: "Every one of the pillars or boards had a ring of gold affixed to its front outwards, into which were inserted bars gilt with gold, each of them five cubits long, and these bound together the boards, the head of one running into another, after the manner of one tenon inserted into another. But for the wall behind, there was only one bar that went through all the boards into which one of the ends of the bars on both sides were inserted" Ant. iii., 6, § 3. "So far," says Mr Fergusson, "everything seems certain and easily understood." The very reverse, however, is the case.

Any one reading this extract would understand Josephus to say, that each board had only one ring attached to it,

and that there was only one row, consisting of five short bars, running along each of the two side walls, and but one bar running along the back wall. Josephus, however, does not say any one of these three things, as any person may see by turning up the passage. Mr Fergusson plainly misquotes the Jewish historian in his laboured effort to give birth to a pole. But, even assuming that the extract was correct, it will not serve Mr Fergusson's purpose, although, after quoting it, he remarks, "so far, therefore, everything seems certain and easily understood." If at each long side there was only one row, consisting of five short bars, of course, there was no necessity for the narrow back wall having a row consisting of five short bars; and hence, Mr Fergusson *makes* Josephus say, quite consistently, but for the wall behind there was only one bar; but then, are we to believe the Scriptures, which say, there were five bars for the back wall, or Josephus (as quoted by Mr Fergusson) who says there was *but one*. These five bars at the narrow back wall completely overturns Mr Fergusson's theory, and prove that there were five bars, arranged in five rows along each of the three walls. But Mr Fergusson goes a little further, for, instead of giving the *one bar*, or middle bar to the back end, as he makes Josephus do, he transports it into the air, and in its upward flight metamorphoses it into a huge ridge pole!

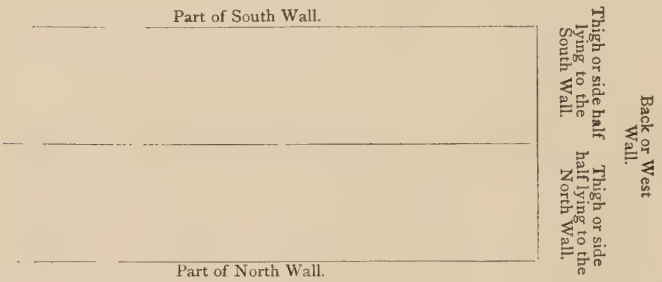
The difficulty of transporting bars forty-five feet long across the wilderness Mr Fergusson thinks is against the supposition of their being that length. But these bars may have consisted each of two or more parts, and yet have been but single bars (*see* page 9). A fishing-rod may consist of several parts, and yet be but one rod. But, even supposing this had not been the case, would a huge ridge-pole, fifteen feet longer, have been less unwieldy and more easily transported? But we must not forget that Mr Fergusson is the parent of the pole, and hence the partiality with which it is treated, as witness the following passage, in which, while hinting at some of the difficulties connected

with it, he diminishes these by reducing the length of his own pole: "No pole could be made stiff enough to bear its own weight and that of the curtains over an extent of forty-five feet without internal supports." Now, the extent of his extended roof is much greater than this, as he tells us elsewhere, and as the woodcut of the south-east view of Tabernacle restored shows (page 51). There we see ten curtains, four cubits broad, spread over it, and the ridge-pole extending the whole length of forty cubits, or sixty feet. We cannot account for Mr Fergusson contradicting himself as well as the text, on any other hypothesis than this, that when he views the supposed difficulties connected with the theories of others, he looks through a powerful magnifier, but when he views those connected with his own creations, he looks through as powerful a diminisher.

Second, The additions to, and alterations made on, the framework by Mr Fergusson, in order to get it to bear up the said ridge-pole, have not a single text, or even hint, in Scripture in their support.

Mr Fergusson supports the pole by resting it on the middle door pillar at the east end, on the middle back board (to the stature of which he adds five cubits, that it may answer this purpose); and on a pillar of his own inventing, which he places five cubits behind the back wall, there may, he says, have been five pillars there. What text warrants him to add to the height of any board, or to add one or five pillars to the number of those mentioned in the text? There must have been pillars beyond the back wall, Mr Fergusson tells us, because the Scriptures, in speaking of the back, always speak in the plural, "the two sides westward." If you examine the text, however, you will find that it is not a row of pillars and the six west-end boards that constitute the sides westward, but only the six west-end boards themselves, whatever the meaning may be. The plural seems to be used in a metaphorical sense. Half of the back or west wall, lying to the south side, and the other half to the north side, seems to be the

reason why these six boards are called sides. This view is borne out by the consideration, that in the Hebrew the word translated sides, as applied to the back wall, is different from that rendered side for the north and south walls. In Hebrew, that for the back wall is "thighs." If you draw an imaginary line right up the centre of the ground-plan of the Tabernacle, you will see this illustrated.


Part of South Wall.
Thigh or side half lying to the South Wall.
Back or West Wall.
Thigh or side half lying to the North Wall.
Part of North Wall.

The length of Mr Fergusson's extended roof is forty cubits. Where, then, was the centre door pillar situated? Was it separated from its neighbours, and placed five cubits further east than the threshold of the sanctuary, that the end of the pole might rest on it, as the cut of his Tabernacle restored shows? If so, then it was employed for a different purpose than that which the text states it was made for. Or were the whole five removed five cubits east? If so, then the hanging that was suspended from them would be a door, not to the sanctuary, but to that of the assumed porch. Or, if the five pillars were situated where the Bible places them, then the middle one could not afford a rest to the end of the ridge-pole; yet in the woodcut it is made to do so. I am afraid Mr Fergusson is shut up to the necessity of placing an additional pillar—perhaps five—at the east end as well as at the west end.

The middle board being raised five cubits, besides being unscriptural, has a burden imposed upon it out of all pro-

portion to that which its fellows had to bear, yet its socket was of the same weight as theirs. But Mr Fergusson may reply—Perhaps a few talents of silver were added to it. It would just be as Scriptural to add five talents to a socket, as five cubits to the height of a board.

Third, It is extremely unlikely that half of the cherub curtains only were displayed within the sanctuary.

Mr Fergusson places only the half of the beautiful cherub curtains within the sanctuary; the other half he disposes of on the outside, and which, he says, formed verandahs on every side. The front, not being inclosed, is the porch; the back and side ones, Mr Fergusson would fain believe were inclosed, and accordingly he incloses them with boards (*see* woodcut, page 51), thus more than doubling the number of boards mentioned in the text. That at least the back verandah was inclosed, Mr Fergusson says, must have been the case, as this "back place is called *Mishcan*, or the 'dwelling,' as distinguished from *ohel*, or the 'tent,' which applies to the whole structure." This certainly is a great mistake. No back verandah, or back place, at the outside of the sanctuary, is either mentioned or called *Mishcan* in the text. It is the cherub curtains as a whole that are so called (Exodus xxvi. 1, 7, 12, 13; xxxv. 11; xxxvi. 13; Num. iii. 25, 36). And why are these beautiful cherub curtains called the Tabernacle or dwelling? Because they went to form cloisters for the priests to dwell in? Surely not. That would be to exalt the servant above his master; but they were evidently so named because they were everywhere visible within—on the roof above, and on all the walls; and thus pre-eminently constituted the dwelling-place of Israel's divine King.

Turn to the third chapter of Second Chronicles, and in imagination enter the Temple, which was made after the model of the Tabernacle, and what do you behold? Look up, the ceiling is adorned with cherubs. Look at the walls on both sides, cherubs there too. Behold the vail before you, all over with the same symbolic figures. Enter the

Tabernacle and view it as I have disposed of the curtains, and you will see that ceiling, walls, and vail, as far as these mystic figures are concerned, correspond with those of the Temple.

Mr Fergusson says, "The only tangible reason for supposing that the sides were inclosed is, that the Temple of Solomon was surrounded on all sides but the front by a range of small cells five cubits wide, in which the priests resided who were specially attached to the service of the Temple." It can easily be shown that this is a very untangible reason, and that all the indications of the Scriptures are against the supposition. The tents of the Tabernacle priests were situated close by, even before the door of the court, and the space between their tents and the Tabernacle was considered holy ground, so that their dwellings were, in a sense, within the sacred inclosures, hence there was no necessity for cloisters being made for them against the sides of the Tabernacle. But further, some of the purposes the temple cloisters served, such as being places for the priests robing and unrobing, and for eating the portions of the sacrifices that fell to their lot (Ezek. xlii. 13, 14), the holy place in the Tabernacle served like purposes (Lev. xvi. 23), proving beyond a doubt that there were no inclosed places at the sides of the tabernacle.

Mr Fergusson is shut up to the necessity of inventing cloisters for the Tabernacle, as his extended sloping roof cannot do without their inclosing boards. It was impossible for a cubit of goats' hair curtains on the one side, and a cubit on the other side (Exod. xxvi. 13), to hang over the soft linen curtains (according to his disposition of them) which had no bars or hard substance at their termination, and hence he doubles the number of boards mentioned in the text, in order to suit his extended roof, and that "the cubit of goats' hair curtains on each side" might have something to hang over and against.

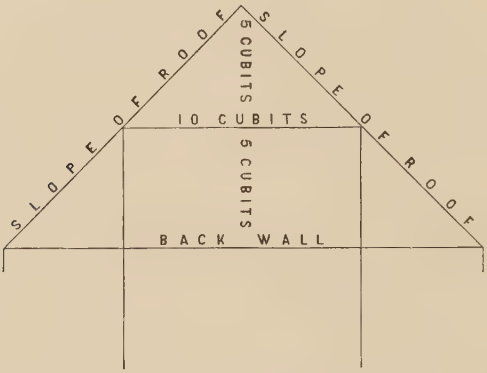
Fourth, The difficulty arising our of the apparent discrepancy between the dimensions of the framework and

those of the curtains is not solved by Mr Fergusson's sloping roof.

Mr Fergusson makes very short work of the opinions of those who differ from him, when he supposes the text will not bear them out, by remarking that this or that arrangement "is in direct opposition to the words of Scripture." Is it not strange, then, that with such a reverence for the sacred text, he should take such liberty with it himself—as adding 5 cubits to the stature of a board, transforming a bar into a ridge pole, placing a pillar (perhaps five) beyond the back wall, giving to the Tabernacle a porch and verandahs, and inclosing the latter with boards? All this is not strange at all, if we put faith in Mr Fergusson, for he tells us that he takes all these liberties "in strict conformity with every word and every indication of the sacred text." If he treats the sacred text in this manner, may not any other restorer do the same, and add 1, 5, 10 cubits to 1, 2, 3 or more boards, or add 5, 10, or 20 to the number of pillars, or transform a bar into a pillar or something else, or lay a burden on a part which it was never designed to bear, and then say with Mr Fergusson that he takes all these liberties in strict conformity "with every word and every indication of the sacred text?" But Mr Fergusson will not allow this; he will suffer no one to vary even a single letter from the text, or make any alteration whatever that deviates a hair's-breadth from its indications. These are privileges he reserves for himself alone.

The greatest wonder of all is, that notwithstanding all his alterations, additions, and transformations and contradictions of the text, he has not succeeded in getting the dimensions of the curtains to agree with those of even his own sloping-roofed Tabernacle. According to his own showing, the curtains are entirely used up by the two slopes of his roof, not a rag is left to cover the open space at the back, forming a triangle which has a base measuring 20 cubits, and a depth from the apex to the centre of the base of 10 cubits. The reach, also, from the top of the back

boards to the top of the ceiling is five cubits. Would the rain and snow, with which Mr Fergusson batters down the flat-roofed Tabernacle, not drift through these great open apertures into the interior, even into the Holy of Holies?



Whatever, then, may be the difficulties connected with a flat-roofed Tabernacle, they are infinitesimal in comparison with those of Mr Fergusson's sloping-roofed one.

This beautiful cherub-curtained habitation bears some analogy to the believer, to the Church, to Christ, and to heaven.

First, To the believer. God, who dwelt within these curtains, condescends to dwell graciously in the heart of every one who is an Israelite indeed. "Saints are an habitation of God through the Spirit." As the Tabernacle was more beautiful within than without, so are God's children. Their souls are clothed with the surpassing lovely and spotless robe of Immanuel's righteousness, and shine resplendently with humility, love, holiness, and heavenly-mindedness. These are the bright hues that adorn the daughters of the eternal glorious King: the blue, and the purple, and the scarlet, that will shine with unfading and ever-increasing lustre for ever and ever.

Have you this spiritual embroidery, and is it shining out

in your daily life? If so, happy are you! Strive, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to shine more and more. No fast colours but these!—all else will fade and die. Is it, however, otherwise with you? If so, come to Jesus. By faith ask Him to throw around you His own beautiful robe of righteousness, and He will do it. Ask Him to send the Spiritual Embroiderer, the Holy Spirit, to imprint on your soul His own lovely image, and to in-work in you the graces of faith, and hope, and love, and every other feature of His likeness, and He will send Him.

Second, To the Church. The Church is composed of true believers. Though many, yet they are all one in Christ Jesus. The curtains, though separate when woven, were all sewed together afterwards, first forming two grand divisions, and then these two united into one by means of loops of blue and clasps of gold. Believers are knit together by the silver threads of affection, and bound together by the golden clasps of love. The union on earth, though close and real, is not so apparent as it really is, in consequence of the imperfections of even the best of God's people, and of those differences of opinion that divide them into various sects; but even here they shall yet "all see eye to eye," and be seen to be one, as they really are. For this the great Intercessor prayed when standing without the vail, and now pleads unceasingly within it, and His petition will not for ever remain unanswered. "I pray that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee." This union of believers is the great spiritual temple in which God delights to dwell, and to manifest His glory. May there be such evidence of your saintship, that your parents or spiritual overseers may be able to say of you, "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Third, To Christ. God dwells or tabernacles in the individual believer, and in the Church composed of believers, but in Christ He dwells more gloriously than elsewhere. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-

head bodily." God dwelt within the curtains by a visible symbol, which was seen by the high priest only, and by him but once in the year. But those who had spiritual decernment when Christ was on the earth saw God in the face of Jesus Christ. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." And in heaven the only sight that its inhabitants will have of God will be His glory as it shines in the face of Christ. Christ there is the "face of God," for as our faces are the medium of expression to our souls, so that of Jesus in heaven will be of God to us. When we look upon it with delight we shall behold beaming upon it the good pleasure of our heavenly Father. Christ is thus pre-eminently the "Tabernacle or habitation of God."

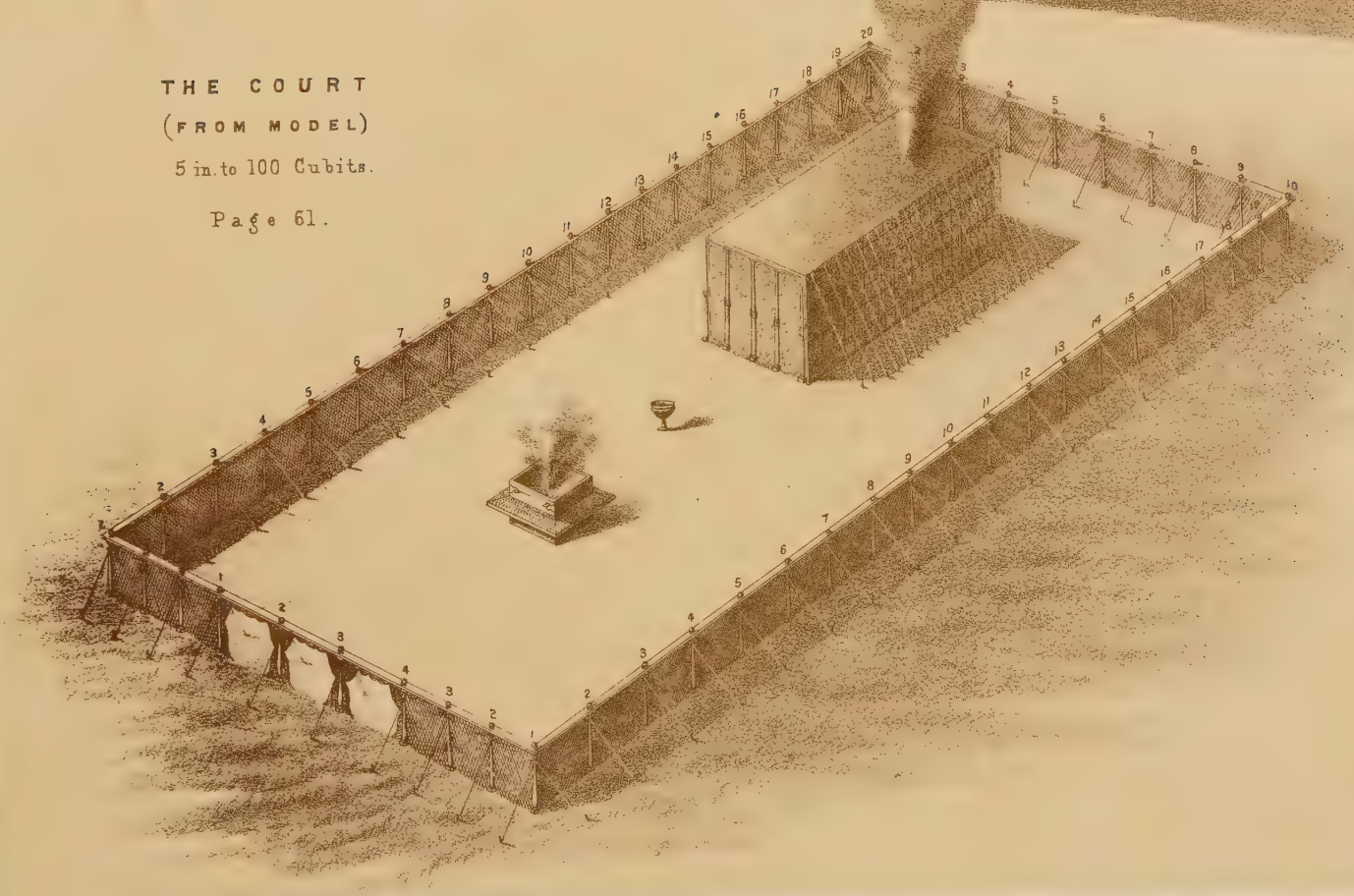
Fourth, To Heaven. Who can doubt but the beautiful cherub-curtained Tabernacle was a type of heaven? Heaven is the place of the most glorious manifestation of God's presence. There angels and saints behold God shining, not by a mere symbol as He did within the cherub curtains, but in the "face of Jesus Christ!" There are those glorious beings who are mighty in strength (and whose perfections probably were shadowed forth in the cherubs that stood upon the Mercy Seat, and adorned roof and walls), even thousands and tens of thousands of holy angels, guardians of the saints while on earth, and their companions and fellow-worshippers for ever in the heavenly temple. What a glorious temple! Christ the Shekinah, the face of God in the midst. Above, before, behind, on every side, all around, myriads and myriads of bright angels and glorified saints, raising their celestial and unwearied voices in one glorious chorus, which will cause its exalted arches to ring for ever and ever with the praises of that great High Priest who died for us, and now pleads our cause before the heavenly throne.

THE COURT

(FROM MODEL)

5 in. to 100 Cubits.

Page 61.



CHAPTER VI.

THE COURT.

THE court was a double square, 100 cubits long and 50 broad, and surrounded on all sides by pillars, of which there were 20 on the south side, 20 on the north, 10 on the west, and 10 on the east, in all 60, or if the corner ones were twice counted, as some suppose, only 56 (Exod. xxvii. 9-18; xxxviii. 9-10). Some are of opinion that the pillars were made entirely of brass, but this could not be the case, as there was not enough of metal. A rod of brass 5 cubits ($7\frac{1}{2}$ feet) long (the court pillars were 5 cubits high), and only 2 inches square, weighs 108 lbs. 2 oz., and 60 pillars as thin as this would swallow up every talent of the brass offering. The only question then to be settled regarding the material of the pillars is, were they simply wooden pillars, or wooden pillars overlaid with brass? Exod. xxvii. 10 appears to teach that there was a sense at least in which they were of brass, but I admit that the corresponding passage (Exod. xxxviii. 10), while informing us that the sockets were of brass, is silent regarding the material of the pillars. Dr Kalisch maintains that the pillars were of wood only, and Exodus xxxviii. 29, 30 (though he does not quote that passage), seems to corroborate his opinion, for in giving an account of what was done with the 70 talents and 2400 shekels of

brass, the pillars are not mentioned. I am unable to reconcile my own opinion with it, which is, that the pillars were overlaid with the metal. My opinion is based, 1*st*, on the text Exod. xxvii. 10, which appears to tell us that the pillars were of brass, and that probably in the sense that they were overlaid with the metal. The altar of burnt offerings is said to have been made of brass, although it was merely overlaid with the metal. 2*d*, The pillars were only half the length of the vail pillars, and were probably proportionately thinner, so that a court socket may have been less than half the weight of a vail pillar one, but say the half, viz., half a talent. The 60 court pillars, and the five for the door of the sanctuary (allowing one talent each for these five) would use up only the half of the 70 talents, and leave 35 talents to be disposed of, which would be greatly too much merely for everlaying the altar with, and making its vessels, and the pins of the Tabernacle and the pins of the court. The inference is that the pillars were overlaid with metal, otherwise the quantity of this metal cannot well be accounted for. 3*d*, Analogy. All the other articles made of wood were overlaid with metal, and there seems no sufficient reason to doubt that the court pillars were an exception, especially since they stood in brazen sockets, and their capitals and connecting rods (*fillets*) were overlaid with silver. Pillars with brazen feet and silver heads were not likely to have plain wooden bodies.

The shape of the pillars is not described, but that they were graceful and ornamental admits of little doubt, for they had capitals, and these were overlaid with silver. The rods from which the hangings were suspended, and which reached from column to column, are said to have been of silver, which must mean that they were overlaid with the precious metal, as there was not nearly enough of it disposable for the purpose of making these rods. The rods of the door pillars of the sanctuary were overlaid with metal (Exod. xxxvi. 38) as well as those of the door

of the court (Exod. xxxviii. 19), and evidently this was the case also with the rods under consideration.

Some are of opinion that the rods rested on hooks, which were inserted near the tops of the pillars; some, that they passed through the capitals which were bored for this purpose; and some, that they rested on, and were fixed to, the tops of the capitals, and that the hangings were suspended from them either by hooks or pins, or nails, and kept down by hooks or pins, or nails attached to the sockets, as was the case with the vail (Exod. xxvi. 32).

The pillars stood at the distance of about 5 cubits from each other; say *about*, for the twenty pillars at each of the long sides did not admit of twenty, but only of nineteen, intervening spaces—each of which would measure rather more than 5 cubits, but the thickness of the pillars, if $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, would make up the difference, and make these spaces exactly 5 cubits each.

Allowing the same thickness for the pillars at the west side, the intervening spaces between them would be rather more than 5 cubits, and the spaces between the three pillars at each side of the gate would be rather less.

In measure, the hangings corresponded to the length and breadth of the court, and were 5 cubits high. It is generally supposed that they were a kind of net-work, admitting of Israelites on the outside of the inclosure witnessing the rites and ceremonies that were performed within. This, however, is mere matter of opinion. The net or cloth for the hangings was made of fine linen. The hanging for the gate of the court differed from the other court hangings. It was of fine twined linen, and embroidered with blue, and purple, and scarlet threads, and resembled the hanging for the door of the sanctuary.

Look for a moment at this court-wall before we leave it. These graceful pillars, like so many sentinels, encompass and seem to guard, the sacred inclosures. They appear as if in holiday attire; their silvery heads contrast to advantage with their brazen feet and burnished bodies, and

these with the snowy whiteness of the hangings and the variegated door; while the Tabernacle glittering with gold and with its sky-blue covering, tends still further to enhance the beauty of this wall of columns and fine linen.

The Tabernacle court was the scene of worship. In the centre stood the brazen altar, where the various offerings were received, and the sacrificial victims slain, and their blood poured out, and on which their carcasses, or parts of them, were consumed by fire. There is but one court spoken of in Exodus, though courts are frequently mentioned in the Psalms as pertaining to the Tabernacle. The reference is sometimes to the Temple, but not always. In Psalms, written by David, the Tabernacle must be meant, as the Temple was not erected till after his day. Some think that a line of demarcation divided the Tabernacle court at the altar, and that none but priests and Levites were permitted to go beyond it, whilst Israelites bringing sacrifices and offerings might come thus far, but no farther. The court thus divided may have been regarded as two courts. May not the space between the Levitical tents, and the Tabernacle court, have been regarded as a kind of outer court, where the people might on occasions assemble, and, through the meshes of the hangings, be spectators of the sacred rites? In the holy land, the priests and Levites on duty at the Tabernacle, would still require to have their tents or houses around the outside of the court. The people, when bringing offerings, were allowed to enter the court, and approach at least as far as the altar; and doubtless, on other occasions as well, there was no bar to pious Israelites visiting the courts of the Lord's house. It is true the space within the linen walls could not accommodate many worshippers at a time, so that some arrangement would be necessary to prevent overcrowding; but, if the space alluded to—the holy ground on the outside of the walls—was regarded as an outer court, a very large assembly might meet there. The Psalms prove that many of God's ancient people loved to visit the courts of the

Lord's house, and were encouraged to wait upon Him there. "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise" (Ps. c.). David's resolution was—"As for me, I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy; and in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy Temple" (Tabernacle) (Ps. v. 7). Read also Ps. xxvii. 4, 6, in which the reference is also to the court or courts of the Tabernacle, to worship in which David looked forward with holy resolution, ardent longings, and joyful anticipations. From experience he could predict of all those who sincerely sought God in these courts: "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house" (Ps. xxxvi. 8). The pious Israelite's great desire to visit God's house is very strikingly and beautifully described in the eighty-fourth Psalm: "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord's house; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Read also Ps. cxvi. and cxxxii.

We may learn from the preceding remarks: 1*st*, That there is an intimate connection between the improvement of the means of grace and eminent piety. Where will you find a holier man than David; he was the man according to God's own heart, but then, he was a man greatly distinguished for his ardent desire for, and delight in, the exercises of the courts of the Lord's house. Those who would covet the best gifts, and grow in grace, and abound in fruits of righteousness will not attain their object unless they follow the example of the psalmist, and other Old Testament saints in their love for, and improvement of, sanctuary services. Can we doubt that his or her soul is prospering, from whose heart ascends such holy breathings as these:

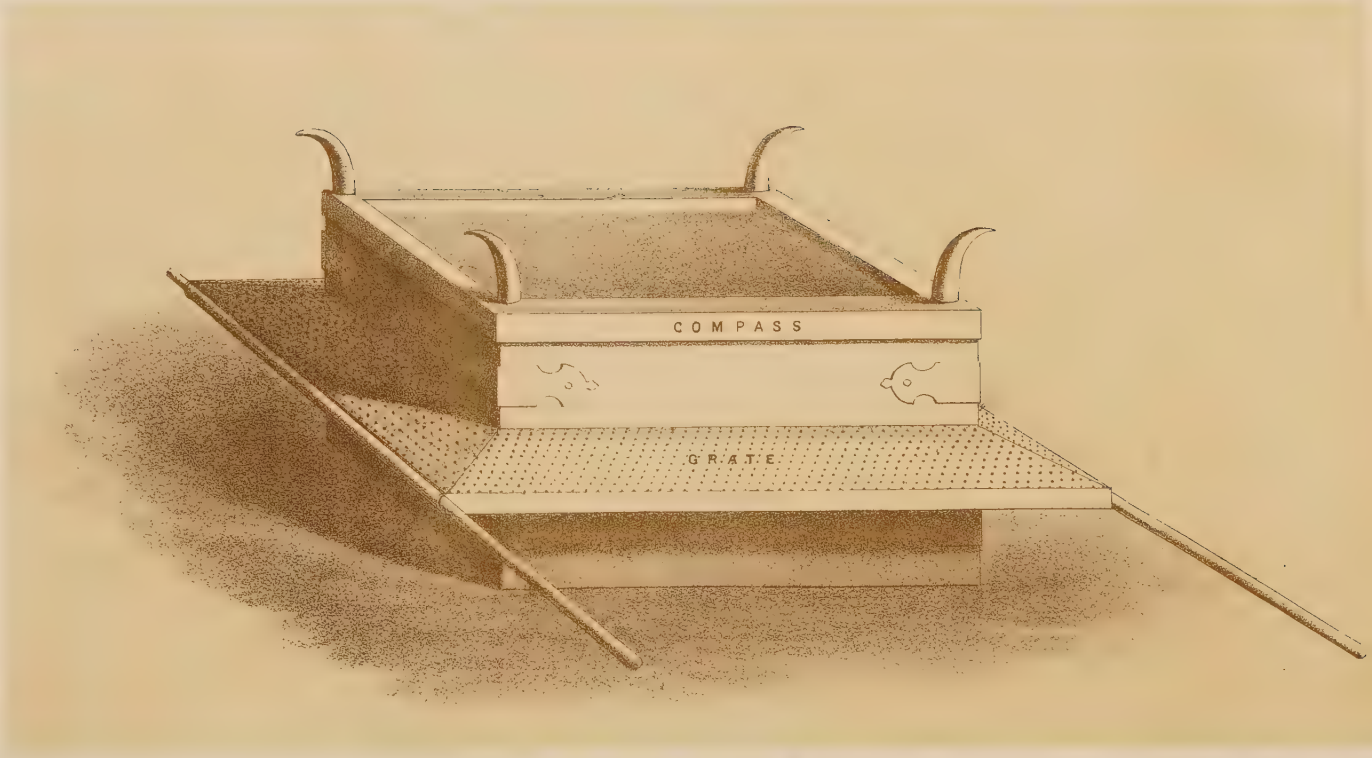
> "My thirsty soul longs veh'mently,
> Yea faints, thy courts to see;
> My very heart and flesh cry out,
> O living God, for Thee?"

Learn 2*d*, That the institution of the Christian Church lays us under obligations to improve the privileges it con-

fers. The dispensation of religion, in connection with the Tabernacle and the Temple courts, was one of shadows and types—the one we live under, of truth and fulfilment. The worshipper, when he entered these courts, saw in the high priest but the shadow of that Great High Priest who was to come; and, in the various sacrifices, but the type of that one great sacrifice that was to be offered up in the fulness of time. Yet those who were Israelites indeed so improved that old dispensation, as to grow in faith, and every grace, and in meetness for the heavenly courts. Under how much deeper obligations do the superior privileges of the Christian dispensation lay you and me to improve them!—a dispensation which contemplates a Saviour come, crucified, buried, risen, ascended, at God's right hand before the heavenly throne, our Great High Priest; and there, without ceasing, pleading on our behalf the efficacy of the blood of the one great offering. May we have vouchsafed to us a growing sense of the exceeding greatness of our privileges, and by the grace of God be enabled so to improve them, that we go from strength to strength, every day drawing nearer to, and becoming increased in, meetness for our Father's house beyond the skies.

Learn 3*d*, That those only who delight in the services of God's house on earth, will be admitted to heaven. David, and those like him who loved well to visit the courts of God's house, are now before the heavenly throne, worshippers in the great temple not made with hands; and, if you and I would be found hereafter, treading those blessed upper courts, we must first in faith, and with holy relish and ardent love, tread those of the sanctuary below. If we are doing so, happy are we, for those same gates that opened to let our Great High Priest and forerunner enter, will open for us also when we die, and we will go in and serve God day and night in His holy temple for ever and ever.

But, remember, if you do not relish and improve sanctuary services while your day of grace lasts, heaven's gates will be closed upon you forever.



THE BRAZEN ALTAR

(FROM MODEL)

½ in to a Cubit.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR.

THE altar of burnt-offerings stood in the centre of the court, and between the gate and the Tabernacle. It was 5 cubits (7½ feet) long, 5 cubits broad, and 3 cubits high (Exod. xxvii. 1-8; xxxviii. 1-7).

It was made of boards of wood overlaid with plates of brass. The horns were rising projections, of which there was one at each corner; and were either exactly of the form of horns, or bore such a resemblance to them as warranted their being so called. They were made of the same wood as the altar, and, like it, overlaid with brass.

The compass, probably, was a rim or border encircling the upper part of the altar (*see* view of altar) less ornate, perhaps, than those of the ark, incense altar, and shewbread table. Without something of the kind, the brazen altar would have had a plainness and want of finish about it not in keeping with the rest of the sacred furniture. The grate of net-work was under the compass, extending like a shelf or platform from the middle of the altar on the outside, and suitable for the priests standing on when offering up sacrifices (*see* view of altar). Ashes falling accidentally off the altar would escape through the net work, while fuel and pieces of the sacrifices would be caught. The altar itself *had no rings*, but the grate had four, one at each of its

corners (*see* view of altar), and it was through these that the staves passed by which the altar (not the grate merely) was carried (*see* Exod. xxvii. 1-8; xxxviii. 1-7). This could not have been the case had the grate (as some suppose) formed the surface, or been placed within the hollow of the altar. Earth, therefore, of which the hollow of the altar must have been filled, would form the surface on which the fire burnt. This grating being only at the distance of $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet from the ground, a very gentle slope of earth could easily have led up to it, at one of the sides.

When removing from a place of encampment, the ashes and fire were removed—the former cast away, and the latter probably placed in a fire-pan, for the purpose of being transported. A cloth of purple was then spread over the top of the altar, and not unlikely fixed to the horns. On this the various vessels connected with the altar were placed, and then a covering of badgers' skin spread over them. When all was ready for starting, the massive brazen framework was raised, and borne away by its bearers—the earth only being left behind.

The utensils of the altar were all made of brass. Their varied uses are obvious. The pans for receiving and removing the ashes to a clean place (Lev. iv. 12); the shovels for scraping the ashes together and placing them in the pans; the basins for holding the blood of the animals sacrificed; flesh-hooks, for keeping the sacrifices in proper position on the fire, lifting up portions that might fall off, and retaining them on the altar. Fire-pans were not unlikely used for holding the fire when the surface of the altar was being cleaned, and also for transporting it when the Israelites were on march. The fire was kindled supernaturally (Lev. ix. 24); and the Divine command was: "The fire shall ever be burning, it shall never go out."

The use of the altar was to make reconciliation upon (Lev. viii. 15) between God and the Israelites. This was done by the priests, who, according to Divine directions, sprinkled upon the altar the blood of the slain animals,

also put on the fire certain pieces of the bodies; and, in the case of whole burnt-offerings, the whole of the carcass, in order to be consumed. Here, day by day, continually, were new victims slain, and fresh blood poured out, and the fire which ever cried, "give, give!" fed. The blood shed, and poured out before and sprinkled upon the altar, was an atonement for the sins of the people. The death of the victim signified that the offerer deserved to die for his transgression, and that its life was substituted and accepted for his. Its being burned, signified the punishment due to sin. This was the appointed means of propitiating Jehovah; in other words, of procuring forgiveness of sins, averting deserved wrath, such as the plague, or other judgments with which the people would have been visited, and securing to them the continuance of His favour in those distinguished privileges and blessings which, as a nation, they enjoyed.

These were mainly temporal in their nature; but the pious, those who were Israelites indeed, no doubt looked by faith from this altar and these sacrifices to what they prefigured, and were thereby made partakers of better, even of spiritual and everlasting blessings.

The Brazen Altar was a type of the cross; the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died. He, the one great sacrifice for sin, was offered up on it. The use of the altar, we have seen, was to make reconciliation upon, and this was the end the cross served. "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him, to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. And you, that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled" (Col. i. 20, 21). See, in the blood shed at, and sprinkled upon, the altar, the type of that blood which cleanseth from sin. See, in the Lamb that was slain and offered upon the altar every morning and evening, "The Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world." Yea! in every bleeding victim, see the one great sacrifice: "Him who was once offered to bear the

sins of many." And see in the priests who served at the altar, Him who, in the fulness of time, offered Himself. Christ is both Priest and Sacrifice. On no other altar than His cross can reconciliation be made between God and the sinner; and no priest but Himself could have ministered at this altar; and no victim but Himself could have bled and died on it for the sins of a world. The Brazen Altar, and the varied sacrifices which were offered on it, had no meaning, if they did not typify Christ.

The horns at the corners of the altar were symbols of power, protection, and salvation. The blood of the sin-offerings were sprinkled on them.

The altar was sometimes used as a place of sanctuary, where transgressors were shielded by Divine authority from the punishment with which the law threatened them. Such as those who had sinned ignorantly, others to whom the law did not regard it as a refuge, sometimes fled to it in the vain hope of escaping the desert of their sin. Thither, you remember, Adonijah fled from the wrath of Solomon, and laid hold on the horns of the altar, and continued there until he received the king's pardon (1 Kings i. 50-53). Thither, also, fled the wicked and treacherous Joab, and laid hold of the same horns, but they availed him not, for he was slain there by the king's command (1 Kings ii. 28-34). But blessed be God, there is an altar, that will prove a sanctuary to every sinner, however vile and wicked, that flees to it. No sooner are its horns, the outstretched arms of Him who bled and died on it for the chief of sinners, grasped by faith, than the penitent clinging one receives the King's pardon, hears a voice coming down from the excellent glory, saying, "I, even I, am He who blotteth out all your iniquity." Oh! blessed Jesus, when to Thy cross I fly, and by faith lay hold of Thee, I am safe. The thunders of God's wrath may roll over my head, and the lightnings of His vengeance flash all around me; my sins, like mountains, may rise up before me, and the law may cry for vengeance, and devils and wicked men may unite for

my destruction,—but none of these things can move me, harm me, or endanger my safety, while in my arms I hold Thee, blessed Jesus! Have you, dear friend, fled to this stronghold and laid hold of these horns of salvation? If not, you are safe nowhere else. If you would escape the desert of sin, the wrath and curse of God, flee now to Christ, and by faith lay hold of Him!

The altar was very conspicuous in the court. It stood in the centre, and was right before the worshipper as he entered. Its shining exterior; its turrets or horns rising at each corner; its blazing fire, and its white-robed priests—the officiating one now laying his hand on the devoted victim, now slaying and pouring out its blood, and sprinkling it upon the altar, and now putting the carcass upon the fire to be burned,—how impressive all this must have been! If the figure of the crucifixion was so prominent in the Tabernacle court, how much more so should the crucified Christ Himself be in the New Testament Church. The Jewish worshipper, as he entered the court, could not fail to see the Brazen Altar; so, when we visit the Christian sanctuary, the eye of faith should ever see, as its grand attraction, the cross of Christ. That minister is leading souls to destruction, the chief theme of whose preaching is not the cross. As the altar was the most prominent article in the old dispensation, and the cross in the new one, and around which the thoughts and affections of all genuine believers cluster, so will it be in heaven; and, if we are among the happy ones to whom its gates will open when we die, we will, even as we enter, behold right before us, and in the very midst, its greatest and grandest sight; yes, the first scene that will burst on our admiring and wondering gaze will be, "The Lamb that once was slain;" and the first wave of celestial melody that will greet our ears and transport our hearts, will be that of praises to Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAVER.

THE Laver stood in the court, between the brazen altar and the door of the Tabernacle (Exod. xl. 7). The size is not mentioned, but it must have been large, as a considerable quantity of water was required daily for various purposes connected with the Tabernacle service. Its form is not described, but most likely it was of a roundish shape (*see* view of Laver, No. 1). The foot is spoken of as distinct from the body, as, "The laver and his foot" (Exod. xxxviii. 8); probably, it was separable—one object of which might be to render it more easily carried. Some are of opinion that the foot was hollow, and that the water was drawn from it by cranes; others are of opinion, that the foot was a kind of flat saucer-like shaped basin, which received its supply of water, as needed, from the laver, which it supported by a shaft arising out of its centre (*see* view of Laver, No. 2).

The laver, whatever may have been its size or shape, was, no doubt, a beautiful and conspicuous object. It was made of "brass, and the foot of it of brass of the looking-glasses (Brazen-Mirrors) of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation" (Exod. xxxviii. 8). The reason why the laver was made of these was, probably, because of the metal being brighter, and of

Nº 1.

Nº 2. Page 72.

LAVERS.

a superior quality to the rest of the brass that was brought as an offering, and consequently, it may have served the purpose of a mirror to the priests, as well as that of a vessel to hold water for them to wash in. As hinted at, p. 6, the laver is a striking memorial of the self-denying liberality of pious women.

The use of the laver was to hold water with which parts of the sacrifices were washed, also for the priests to wash their hands and feet with before serving at the altar or entering the sanctuary. The penalty for disobedience was death. "When they go into the Tabernacle of the congregation they shall wash with water, that they die not, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord" (Exod. xxx. 20, 21). This washing, doubtless, pointed to the unsullied holiness of God, to the pollution of sin, and to the purity of heart necessary in those who would render acceptable worship. If the neglect of the mere outward symbol of purity—the washing of the hands and feet with water—was punishable with death, how hateful must an impure heart be in the sight of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity! The priests required to draw near God, not only with clean hands and feet, but with a pure heart. No worship, rendered by any one, can be pleasing to the Holy One of Israel, however clean the hands, if the heart be polluted. The Lord requireth truth in the inward parts. If the brazen altar shows us that the guilt of sin can be cancelled by the blood of Christ alone, the laver no less emphatically teaches us that the defilement of sin can be washed away by no other agency than that of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. vi. 11; Titus iii. 5; Heb. x. 22). Let us daily be making fresh application to both fountains; to the precious blood of Jesus, that our daily trespasses may be blotted out, and to the Holy Spirit's gracious influences, that sin may be crucified within us, and our hearts may be purified. Then, with David, we may say, "I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass Thine altar, O God!" Hear a voice

from the laver saying, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

The priests, without washing, dared not, on penalty of death, enter the house made with hands, and none but those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and renewed by the washing (laver) of regeneration, will ever enter into the one not made with hands, where all the ransomed are kings and priests unto God for ever and ever.

CHAPTER IX.

TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

FROM MODEL.

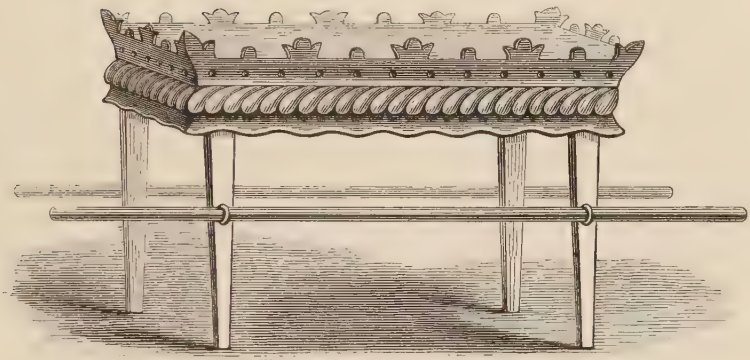


TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.
Scale—1 inch to a cubit.

ON the right hand or north side of the holy place (Exod. xxvi. 35) stood the table of shewbread, in size, 2 cubits long, 1 broad, and 1½ high (Exod. xxv. 23-30; xxxvii. 10-16). It was made of wood, overlaid with gold. Its four legs supported a leaf, which was encircled by a crown or ornamental rim of gold, that may have served as a guard to prevent articles from falling off. Below the leaf, the legs were united, and the framework compacted by a one handbreadth border, having, probably, around its under edge a crown of gold, which may have corresponded with that around the leaf. The four

rings, through which the staves passed, were placed at the four corners over against the border. There were several utensils connected with this table, all made of gold, but the purposes they served are not mentioned. The dishes are supposed to have been plates on which the shewbread was placed; the bowls, for holding wine, which was poured out as libations in the holy place; the spoons or cups, for holding the frankincense, which was set on each pile of bread, and the covers, for covering the bowls, and perhaps also for passing over the piles and the frankincense.

The bread was made of fine flour (Lev. xxiv. 5-9), and was unleavened. Twelve cakes, in piles of six each, always stood on the table, hence it was called the perpetual bread. It was also named the bread arranged in order, the meaning of which is obvious. Its more significant name we will notice presently. On the top of each pile was placed frankincense, probably in the cups we have spoken of. It is thought by some that this frankincense was burnt once a week, when the bread was being renewed; and by others that it was ever burning, which does not appear very likely, as the quantity consumed would be very great; but there may have been some means by which it was very slowly consumed, and kept always burning; in that case, the holy place would be ever fragrant. The bread was called the shewbread,* because it was before the symbol of God's presence—the vail only intervening. The bread was renewed every Sabbath by fresh loaves; those which were removed belonged to the priests, and could be eaten only by them, and in no place but the holy one. The shewbread was a peace or thank-offering by which the Israelites, represented by the twelve loaves, acknowledged their dependence on God as the giver of the staff of life, evinced their gratitude in giving part to Him of that, all of which they owed solely to Him. It is true He had no need of it Himself, but His servants the priests required sustenance, and He granted it to them. All thank-offerings were holy—this one was pecu-

* Hebrew, "*bread of faces*," *or* "*presence bread.*"

liarly so: "It is most holy unto Him of the offerings made by fire" (Lev. xxiv. 9). Save incense, all other offerings were presented at the brazen altar—this in the holy place; the ceremonies connected with them were soon over—this, however, was a ceaseless offering. The bread was ever on the table before the Lord. It is said to be made by "fire," as the frankincense, which was burned, constituted one and the same offering.

As far as the shewbread is considered merely in the light of a peace or thank-offering, there is no difficulty concerning it; but the reason of its being placed on a table in the Holy Place, is not so easily understood. Probably, as the "Tabernacle" was the residence of Israel's Divine King, the idea of a palace was thereby, along with the other arrangements, carried out. Thus, the ark or throne, the golden candlestick, the incense altar, the shewbread table, with its bread and wine, may have been regarded as the requisite furniture and provisions, and the priests as the servants who waited upon the King, and mediated between Him and the people.

It has already been mentioned that the Israelites, in presenting this offering, acknowledged God as the giver of food. To Him they owed every bite of bread they ate; and, by presenting a small portion of bread to Him, signified that they felt they were indebted to Him for all the food they possessed. The shewbread, ever lying on the table, was thus a constant memorial of God's goodness, in providing for the nourishment of His people.

We are as much indebted to the Great Giver for the staff of life, and for all other temporal blessings, as the Israelites were; and it is our duty, as much as it was theirs, to testify our gratitude by offering Him part of what He has given us, not that He stands personally in need of our gifts any more than He stood in need of the shewbread, but that His poor saints, and His cause or church in the world, may be benefited thereby; and that our own gratitude, and sense of dependence on Him for all temporal, as well as

spiritual blessings, may be kept ever alive within us: "To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Some are of opinion that the shewbread was a figure of Christ. Whether it was or not, it is true that bread is a striking emblem of Him, and He himself says: "I am the bread of life." May we feed by faith on Him, and our souls will be nourished unto eternal life. May our prayer be—"Lord, evermore give us this bread." Some regard the bread and wine as representing the spiritual nourishment which may be obtained in the ordinances of the New Testament Church. It is true, only the priests were permitted to eat the shewbread; but all true believers are a royal priesthood, and they are all invited to sit at the New Testament Table, and partake of its manifold blessings. "Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." May not the Shewbread Table point to the abundant supply of good things prepared in the heavenly Temple, for all those whom Christ will make kings and priests unto God forever. There a table is spread before His face, that is continually furnished with new wine and heavenly manna, with which the ransomed of the Lord will be refreshed, and made glad forever. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK

(FROM MODEL)

CHAPTER X.

THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

(Lamp-Bearer.)

ON the left hand, or south side (Exod. xl. 24) of the Holy Place, stood the candlestick. It and its utensils were made of a talent (Exod. xxv. 39) of pure gold, equal to 1500 oz. This quantity of the precious metal, at the present day, is worth £6300. A talent of gold, however, forms but a small block, and the probability is that the lamp-bearer was hollow, and somewhere between 3 and 5 feet high. It consisted of a base and shaft with three branches (Exod. xxv. 31), like arms extending from each side. The workmanship was very chaste and highly ornamental, the decorations consisting of bowls, knops, and flowers. The bowls were almond-shaped (verse 33), of which there were three (verse 33) on each of the arms, and four (verse 34) on the shaft. The knops were roundish in shape, like an orange or pomegranate. The knops probably occupied the corresponding position in the candlestick that capitals do in pillars; and, as there was only one knop to a branch, it would constitute the head of the branch, and be so shaped as to suit it to hold a lamp. There were, however, four (verse 34) knops mentioned in connection with the shaft—three of which occupy positions different from what could be found on the branches,

which tends to show that there was only one knop to each of the six branches. The position on the shaft for three of its four knops, is below the places where the three pairs of branches emerge, and the purpose the knops there seem to serve is to bear them up. The first, or undermost knop, would thus be the capital of the first division of the shaft or pillar bearing up the first or undermost pair of branches; the second knop would be the capital of the second division bearing up the second pair of branches; and the third knop would be the capital of the third division bearing up the third pair of branches; and the fourth knop the capital at the top of the shaft; and, like those at the end of each branch, so formed, as already mentioned, as to hold a lamp —the shaft or stem being thus a kind of compound pillar. Some, however, maintain that each branch had three knops, and, in favour of this view, quote Exod. xxv. 34: "And in the candlestick (shaft) shall be four bowls, made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers." From this they seek to show, that though one knop only is mentioned in connection with the branches, it is to be understood, from the above passage, that all the bowls had knops and flowers, but the two "theirs" should be "its"—the pronoun being singular in the Hebrew. In the corresponding passage in Exod. xxxvii. 20 (*Eng. ver.*), the pronoun, as it ought to be, is in the singular, so that its knops and its flowers refer to the shaft, and not to the bowls; and, consequently, the above passages, while they show that the shaft or stem had more knops than one, by no means prove that the branches had more than one each.

We have no hint to guide us as to what kind of flowers were imitated in the decorations. As they were evidently connected with the knops, and placed beside them, they were the same in number, viz., one for each arm, and four for the stem.

On the arch of Titus at Rome are represented the spoils taken from Jerusalem, amongst which appear the table of shewbread and the golden candlestick, but it should be

borne in mind, that these were not those of the Tabernacle, though they may have resembled them, but of the Herodian Temple. Figures of birds and other creatures appear on the base of the candlestick, but this is accounted for on the supposition that the Romans removed the old base and substituted a new one.

BAS-RELIEF FROM THE ARCH OF TITUS, SHOWING THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK AND TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

The oil which supplied the lamps was pure olive oil, not

ground in a mill, but beaten in a mortar, to render it finer than it could be by any other mode. It is difficult to understand from the various passages bearing on the subject, whether the lamps burnt both day and night, or only during the night,—some passages apparently favouring the one view, and some the other, thus, "To cause the lamp to burn always" (Exod. xxvii. 20); and, "Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure olive-oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually" (Lev. xxiv. 2).

These passages seem to teach that the lamps burnt both day and night. If they do not teach that, the meaning must be, that "continual" and "always" signify at regular intervals, as in the case of some ordinances and offerings which are called perpetual, though occurring only at intervals. The other view, that they burnt only during the night, seems to be supported by, "Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning" (Exod. xxvii. 21); "And Aaron shall burn thereon (the golden altar) sweet incense every morning, when he dresseth the lamps" (Exod. xxx. 7, 8). From these texts it would appear, that the lamps burnt only during the night. If they were not intended to teach that, the meaning must be, that the lamps were dressed in the morning, probably, one after another, not necessitating more than one being extinguished at a time, and, after being dressed and lighted, burnt during the day, the lamps receiving such further attention in the evening as admitted of their burning till the morning. As there were no windows in the Tabernacle, and the priests had duties to perform during the day in the holy place, it is almost certain that the lamps burnt always.

This splendid lamp-stand, as we have seen, was made of the purest gold, and was never suffered to become dim, but was kept spotlessly clean by the priests, while its seven lamps were fed with the very finest olive oil. Its graceful shape and beautiful ornaments, and resplendent brightness shining clear as a mirror, with its seven soft clear brilliant

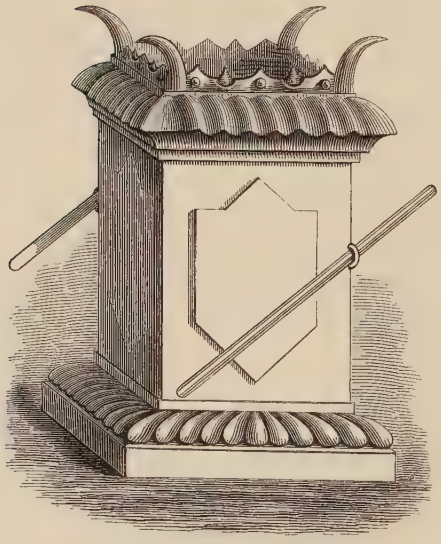
lights, must have rendered it a most striking and imposing object. Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Priests and kings were anointed with that symbol, and all true believers with what it signified, the gracious influences of the Divine Spirit. The Holy Spirit is within every believer, as the candlestick was within the sanctuary, a source of light and life and comfort. He is also in the Church; all its true light is from Him, and the light emanating from Him, as the number seven indicates, is sufficient, perfect, complete; nothing more is needed in order to the purity, righteousness, and glory of the Church. This very number is expressly applied to the Spirit, and one cannot help thinking that the reference is to the seven lamps of the golden candlestick. "Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne" (Rev. i. 4).

As the first apartment in the Tabernacle was illuminated by the lights of the candlestick, and as the Church, composed of all believers on earth, in every age, is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, so will the Church triumphant in heaven, that great temple not made with hands; and the light shall never go out, it will burn always; so that there shall be no night there; nor sun, nor moon, nor stars shall shine in that happy place, for the glory of God and the Lamb is the light thereof.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GOLDEN ALTAR.

FROM MODEL.



THE GOLDEN ALTAR.—Scale, 1 inch to a cubit.

AT the further end of the Holy Place, and in the same line with the ark, stood the golden altar, the vail, however, intervening between them (Exod. xxx. 6). It was made of wood, and overlaid with gold, and measured 1 cubit long, 1 broad, and 2 high (Exod.

xxx. 1-10). A crown or ornamental rim of gold encircled the top. It appears to have had only two rings, and these at transverse corners; whereas, both the shewbread table and the ark had four. There was a rising projection at each of its four corners, similar to those of the brazen altar, and, like them, called horns.

It is named the golden altar, though merely overlaid with the precious metal, to distinguish it from the other altar, which was overlaid with brass. It is also named the altar of incense, as incense alone was offered on it. This was done by Aaron, the high priest, every morning and evening (Exod. xxx. 7, 8). Incense was made of various sweet smelling and precious spices, according to Divine directions (Exod. xxx. 34). A similar compound, for any other purpose, was not allowed to be made, and no other but this could be used as incense. When the incense was to be offered, a fire-pan or censer, with live coals from the brazen altar, was put upon the golden altar for burning it. The clouds of smoke arising from it as it burnt was full of perfume, and spread their fragrance all around, penetrating the vail, and reaching even to the throne.

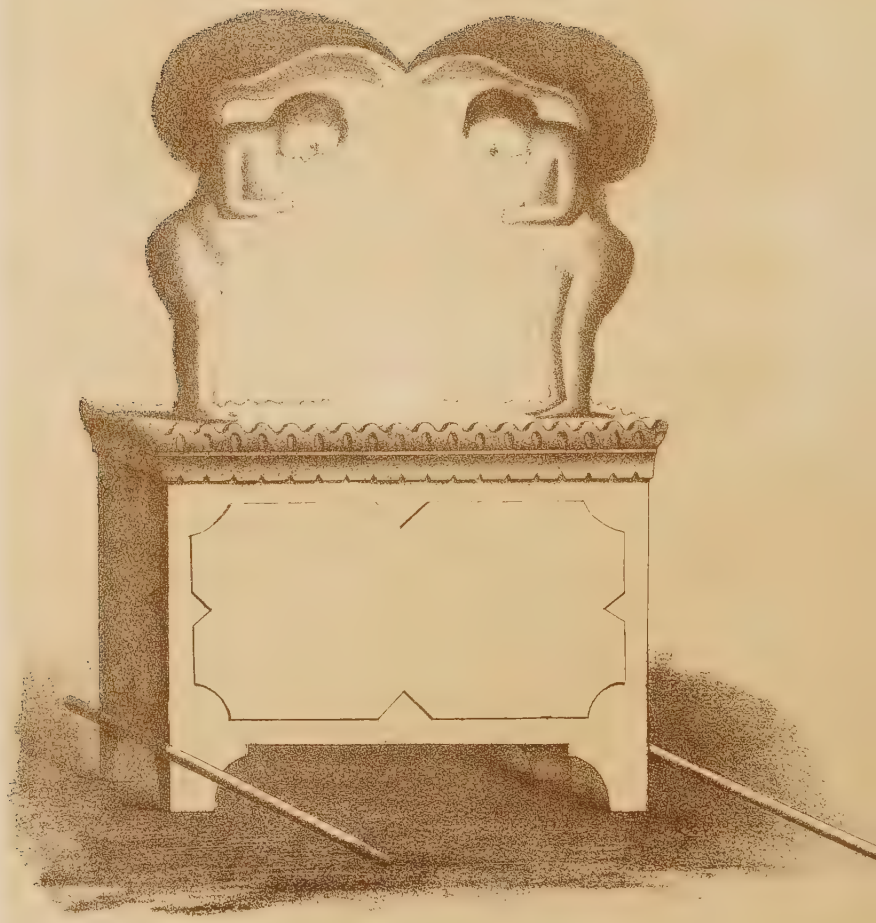
The priest while presenting this offering was the people's intercessor with God, praying for them, and asking Him to hear and answer their petitions; not that incense had any propitiatory significance—the animal sacrifices alone had that. Yet without propitiation there is no access to God, but then the horns of this altar have been sprinkled with atoning blood (Exod. xxx. 10; Lev. xvi. 18), so that it is from a blood-sprinkled altar that the sacred odours arise, bearing on their wings Israel's cry for mercy and all needed blessings.

The burning of incense in the holy place is regarded as an emblem of prayer. David so employed it. "Let my prayer be set before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice" (Ps. cxli. 2). And St John in his vision of heaven tells us that when he had taken the book "the four beasts (living creatures) and

four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours (incense), which are the prayers of saints" (Rev. v. 8). As the sweet fragrance of smoking incense was most agreeable to the senses, so are the prayers of God's children very pleasing and acceptable to Him.

The brazen altar is considered a type of Christ with respect to His atonement, and the golden one a type of Him with respect to the other part of His priestly office—His intercession. Christ not only bled for us on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins, but pleads for us before the heavenly throne. He is our advocate with the Father. The golden altar was before the ark or throne, the vail intervening between; but Christ is before the throne in heaven, but there no vail intervenes. It was from an altar with blood-sprinkled horns that the evening and morning incense ascended, and so when our great High Priest intercedes for us on high it is on the ground of His atoning sacrifice. See in His pierced hands and feet the blood-sprinkled horns. The very hands He holds up while He pleads on our behalf are those that were once nailed to the accursed tree.

From before the heavenly throne He is now looking down lovingly upon all His believing children, inviting and encouraging them to offer up their prayers, and assuring them that He himself will present them, and secure for them gracious answers in the bestowal of rich and soul-satisfying blessings. Are you one of His believing children? If so, bend your ear and listen to His voice as it comes rolling down from the golden altar: "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."



THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.

1 in. to a Cubit.

(FROM MODEL)

CHAPTER XII.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.

THE first apartment of the Tabernacle was a double square, 20 cubits long and 10 broad. It contained three articles of furniture. On the south side (Exod. xl. 24) stood the golden candlestick; opposite it, on the north side (v. 22), the shewbread table; and between them, but farther west and close by the vail, (v. 26) the golden altar. These have already been described. Let us now lift the vail and enter the throne-room. It is four-square, 10 cubits long, 10 broad, and 10 high. The roof above, and the walls before, behind, and on the right and left hand, are all resplendent with cherubs. Wherever the eye rests it is on these symbolic figures; they encompass us. In this innermost chamber of the Great King stood the Ark, the chief and most sacred of all the objects connected with this earthly sanctuary, that for which the Tabernacle itself and all its furniture were made, and to which they were subordinated. Its pre-eminence is pointed out in its being the first thing connected with the Tabernacle that God spoke to Moses about, and commanded to be made (Exod. xxv. 10-22), and also in its being used in the Temple (1 Kings viii. 6), whereas all the other articles of sacred furniture were superseded by new ones. Let us approach it then with the very deepest

reverence, put off our shoes, for, if any place, surely that on which we now stand is "holy ground."

This golden throne consisted of—1st, The Ark proper; 2d, the Mercy-seat; 3d, the Cherubim; and 4th, the Shekinah.

The Ark,

Which means a box or chest, was made of wood, and overlaid both within and without with gold, and was 2½ cubits long and 1½ high and broad (Exod. xxv. 10-22.) Along the upper edge ran an ornamental rim or crown of gold. The rings in our English version of the Scriptures are said to have been placed in the four corners, but this is a mistranslation, for the Hebrew word rendered corners is "feet." So that this sacred chest had four feet, and on them the rings were fixed, not at the front and back as they are generally represented, but at the two ends, so that the poles could be drawn out as stated in 1 Kings viii. 8. The rings so placed would cause the ark to be more elevated, when being transported, than the rest of the sacred furniture, which may have been necessary, as it was a kind of leading standard, and borne by the priests or Levites (Num. iii. 31; Josh. iii. 3) in the fore-front (Num. x. 33) of the army, and hence it was desirable that it should be elevated and conspicuous. In the ark were deposited:

1. The tables of stone, on which were written with the fingers of God the Ten Commandments. "Put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee." In these commandments God testified or showed His will, and they were evidence that He had made a covenant with the Israelites. If obedient they would be a testimony in their favour, but if disobedient they would, like the rest of the Scriptures afterwards given them, and placed beside the same repository, testify against them (Deut. xxxi. 26.) Hence this sacred chest is sometimes called the Ark of the Testimony. It is also called the Ark of the Covenant, as the moral law formed the basis of the covenant or gracious

agreement God made with the Israelites, and in which He promised to be their God, and to regard them with favour on condition of their obedience.

2. A golden pot with manna in it was laid up before the testimony. Moses, by Divine direction, instructed Aaron to do this (Exod. xvi. 33, 34).

3. Aaron's rod that budded was likewise laid before the testimony (Numb. xvii. 10). Some are of opinion that the pot and the rod were not put in the Ark, but merely placed beside it. This view is seemingly supported by 1 Kings viii. 9, which expressly states that it contained only the two tables of stone, but the probability is that these relics were lost during the time the sacred chest was in the possession of the Philistines, for it is expressly stated in Heb. ix. 4, that they were once in it as really as the two tables of stone were.

Never before did casket contain such priceless treasures. All the wealth of Egypt and Babylon was dross in comparison.

The Mercy-seat.

The Mercy-seat is spoken of as distinct from the Ark, though forming its lid, and this is significant, and intimates that it was intended to serve a special purpose (Exod. xxv. 17-22). The literal translation of the Hebrew word rendered Mercy-seat is "covering." It was made of pure gold, and was the same length and breadth as the ark, and consequently exactly fitted, and was probably kept in its place by the ornamental rim. Though the lid in the original is simply called a "cover," yet from its being spoken of as distinct from the Ark, it is generally believed to have a deeper meaning than its mere literal one, and to signify to cover sin in the sense of forgiving sin, and unquestionably it is closely connected with the forgiveness of sin. It was the place upon which God showed Himself merciful in forgiving sin, and hence it was called the Mercy-seat; but as it was mercy through or by means of God's having been propitiated by sacrifice, the blood of the

slain victims having been sprinkled on it (Lev. xvi. 14, 15) on the great day of atonement, it is thought that "propitiatory" would have been a more significant name than "Mercy-seat." St Paul calls it the "propitiatory" in Heb. ix. 5, though the Greek word there is rendered "mercy-seat," but the same word in Rom. iii. 25 is rendered "propitiation." It was by means of the blood sprinkled on the Mercy-seat that God was propitiated, and forgave the sins of the people. The blood sprinkled on the Mercy-seat, and the blessings dispensed by God to the Israelites in consequence of this rite, is typical of Christ's shed blood, through or by means of which God dispenses pardon and all the blessings of salvation to those who believe in Jesus Christ. How appropriately, then, is Christ called the "Propitiatory!" (Rom. iii. 25). God is now seated on a throne of mercy, of mercy because sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb; and transgressors, though their sins be as scarlet or red like crimson, may, without the intervention of priest or minister approach, nay, are invited and entreated to come.

In letters of blood, His own precious blood, our great High Priest has written on the Mercy-seat the crowning Gospel invitation—"Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

The Cherubim.

Two cherubs made of gold stood on the Mercy-seat, one at each end (Exod. xxv. 19-22). They had wings which they stretched forth on high, and faces which looked one to another with a downward bend to the Mercy-seat, and this is all we know with certainty regarding them. They are generally represented and described as human figures, boys or females with wings outstretched, meeting on high and forming a kind of canopy. The empty space bounded by the inner edge of the canopy above, the Mercy-seat below, and the cherubim on both sides, was filled by the symbol of God's presence. The corresponding place on and above heathen arks was filled by one of the heathen gods.

The cherubim, from the description in Exodus, do not appear to have resembled, as some suppose, those which Ezekiel beheld in vision. His cherubim were a compound of man, lion, ox, and eagle.

Some are of opinion that the cherubim are not intended as types of any particular order of beings, but from hints in various parts of Scripture, it is not unlikely that they symbolise the angels, and perhaps also glorified saints. It is admitted that the Ark is properly regarded as the throne of Jehovah, and the Shekinah as a symbol of His presence. As the holy angels are frequently mentioned as in close proximity to the throne, they are readily suggested to our minds as the beings the "cherubim" are intended to represent. "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the Temple. Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain He covered His face, and with twain He covered His feet, and with twain He did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah vi. 1-3; *see* also Rev. vii. 11). The faces of the cherubs that stood on the Mercy-seat had a downward bend, showing the deep interest they took in the blood-sprinkled Mercy-seat, and this is the very attitude of the holy angels with respect to what that Mercy-seat prefigured. The angels with faces bent downwards, indicating the deepest, intensest interest in those who have been saved through the blood of the Lamb, read the story of redeeming love, "which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Pet. i. 12). [*Lit. trans.*, "To bend looking."]

The Shekinah

Was the name given by the Jews to that visible manifestation of God's presence, which filled the space between the mercy-seat and the expanded wings of the cherubim (Exod. xxv. 22). It appears to have been a supernatural brightness or splendour, a very luminous object, resembling a

bright cloud or flame, and is sometimes called the "glory." What symbol could be more appropriate of Him of whom it is said, "He is light!" The corresponding place on and above heathen arks, was filled by the figure of a god. Though the guardians or bearers of God's throne might be represented by figures expressive of their great and noble powers, no combination of animals in a figure was ever permitted to represent the living and true God. He did, indeed, condescend, in consequence of the inability of the Hebrews to realise the idea of an unseen and spiritual God, to grant them a symbol of His presence, that they might be duly impressed with the grand truth that He, as their God and king, was dwelling in their midst. But that symbol was not the likeness of any of His creatures, however significant they might be of power, goodness, love, or other great qualities.

Only priests were permitted to enter the Tabernacle, with the exception of Moses, who was commanded by God to appear before Him there, that he might be divinely instructed concerning the laws and worship of the Jews. It is not necessary to suppose that Moses or the high-priest, when consulting Jehovah, entered the Holy of Holies. The probability is, that Moses or the priest inquired of the Lord in the Holy Place, standing, while so engaged, before the golden altar, and there would hear the voice of the Lord coming from between the cherubim.

There are several recorded instances of God's speaking to His servants from the ark, of which the following are examples:—"And when Moses was gone into the Tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim; and He spake unto him" (Num. vii. 89). "And the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the Tabernacle of the congregation" (Lev. i. 1). "Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God, and wept, and sat there

before the Lord, and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the Lord. And the children of Israel enquired of the Lord (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days; and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days), saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And the Lord said, Go up; for to-morrow I will deliver them into thine hand" (Judges xx. 26-28). The ark was thus the throne of God, on which He was seated by a visible symbol. The people's representative, the high priest, was permitted to approach, and was favoured with an audience. God graciously listened to their petitions, and answered by an audible voice.

The mercy-seat with the cherubim, as already noticed, was not simply the lid, but an object distinct from the ark, yet the two were comprehended in the general name, "The Ark." Both together formed the Divine throne. Here God, in visible symbol, was enthroned. From the first the Ark was regarded as the most sacred object connected with the Tabernacle, and circumstances occurred during its history to increase the veneration in which it was held by the people. We have already seen, that in the instructions given by God to Moses concerning the Tabernacle, it had the foremost place, being described before the rest of the sacred furniture, and even before the sanctuary itself. It stood in the most holy place, which no one ever entered, save the high priest, and by him only on one day of the year. When carried from place to place in the wilderness, it was hid from mortal gaze by a covering (Num. iv. 5, 6). It was death for any one to touch it, or even to look into it (Num. iv. 15). None but those divinely appointed were permitted to carry it (Num. iv. 15). The Levites, to whom the duty pertained, lifted up the ark on their shoulders, and marched in the fore-front of the army leading the way, guided by the cloudy pillar, which moved in the air above them (Num. x. 33-36). The ark was thus the

standard of the moving host, and not only led the way, but went before to search out a resting-place for the wanderers (Num. x. 33). The various encampments were fixed by it. After reaching the Holy Land, it was set up at Gilgal (Josh. v. 10), afterwards was removed to Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1), where it remained for three or four hundred years. It was for sometime in the possession of the Philistines (1 Sam. iv. 11). It was removed by David to Zionhill when he fixed his residence there (2 Sam. vi. 12-16), and at last found a resting-place in the Temple of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 6, 7).

Many striking instances attest its great sacredness and mighty power. Many of the people of Beth-shemesh were smitten dead for looking into it (1 Sam. vi. 19-21). It overthrew Dagon, the God of the Philistines, in his own temple. It parted the waves of the Jordan, and made a dry way for the many thousands of Israel to pass over, and was upheld in the middle of that hitherto untrodden path until all Israel stood safe on the shores of the promised land (Josh. iv. 10-17). And before it the proud walls of Jericho fell down. These proofs of its powers could not fail to keep alive and increase the veneration with which it was regarded.

The two tables of stone, with the ten commandments written on them with the finger of God, were the principal deposit the ark contained. These are the twin-pillars that support the moral government of God. They remind us that righteousness and truth are the foundations of His throne, attributes from which fallen man can look for nothing but condemnation. But, blessed be God, the mercy-seat is sprinkled with blood, and that speaks of mercy. Righteousness and truth are still, and ever will be, the foundation of God's throne, and the awful voice we hear from it to day is, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," but oh! for ever praise the Lord, the eye of faith beholds that on the mercy-seat which pacifies the troubled conscience. Blood on the mercy-seat? Yes, and the only blood that

can atone for sin. Christ, our great High Priest, has entered the true holy of holies, and, with His own precious blood, sprinkled yonder mercy-seat, so that the greatest transgressor may now approach the throne without dismay, and there obtain the forgiveness of all his sins.

Look again at the Ark. It was a meeting-place for God and man. Here the high priest, who represented the people, met God, and for himself and them obtained forgiveness of sin, and, in cases of doubt and difficulty, received directions, in an audible voice, to guide them in the path of duty. It was on account of what the blood (sprinkled on the propitiatory) prefigured, that God and sinful man could meet before the golden throne. Christ Jesus is the true propitiatory, and here, and nowhere else, can God and sinners meet. God will meet with you as a reconciled God nowhere else. Seek God here and you will find Him, and find Him ever ready to hear and to answer your petitions, and to do unto you exceeding abundantly above all that you are able to ask or think. Have you met God here? Do you come daily in faith to this throne of grace, and cry for pardon of your sins, grace to help you in time of need, and light to guide you in the way that you should go? If not, remember, if you continue to keep at a distance from the meeting-place while your day of grace lasts, on the day of judgment, when Christ will be seated on the great white throne, you will find yourself on the left-hand of the Judge, and hear these awful words addressed to you, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Look yet once more at the Ark of the Covenant. Here God condescended, in a visible symbol, to be present with His people. "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony." This visible manifestation of God's presence was one of the peculiar privileges of God's ancient people; to them pertained "the glory." God does not now appear to His people in

a visible symbol. Is the new dispensation, then, inferior to the old one? By no means. It is more spiritual, it is true, but on that very account it is more glorious, and to it pertaineth greater privileges: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Although God does not appear as of old from between the cherubim, yet He is still as really present in the Church now as ever He was, fulfilling His promise, "In all places where I record My name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee (Exod. xx. 24);" and "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." God is graciously present in the assemblies of His saints, and though the bodily eye sees Him not, the eye of faith sees Him, and the renewed heart feels the comforting and quickening influence of His presence. At a throne of grace, in the meeting of God's children, and in the sanctuary, do you thus realise and enjoy His gracious presence? If you do, your heaven has already begun. If not, remember, it will matter little that you bend your knees with others, that you visit the sanctuary, and there fix your eyes on the minister, and even on a visible symbol of the Deity, if such were vouchsafed, if you do not see Him with the eye of faith, and if your soul is not warmed and spiritualised and elevated heavenwards by a sense that He is in the midst blessing you and doing you good. Come now, under a sense of sin and guilt to the throne of grace; you need not be afraid to come on account of your sins, for it is sprinkled with the precious blood of Christ. Come, draw near, pray in faith, for mercy to pardon and grace to help you in time of need, and you will not fail to experience the blessedness of God's gracious presence.

"Jesus, where'er Thy people meet,
There they behold Thy mercy-seat:
Where'er they seek Thee, Thou art found,
And every place is holy ground."

PRIEST.

CHAPTER XIII.

PRIESTS.

AFTER the giving of the law, the office of priest was restricted to one family, that of Aaron: "Take unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons" (Exod. xxviii. 1).

Qualifications.

Every applicant for the priesthood had to prove his descent from Aaron, and had to be free from bodily defect or blemish. An Israelite who wanted a finger or a toe, was hump-backed, flat nosed, or had any such-like defect, or who had married a profane woman, or one who had been put away from her husband, was not permitted to discharge sacerdotal duties, even though he belonged to the illustrious house of Aaron (Lev. xxi.): "He shall not go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar" (ver. 23). All this points to the dignity and sacredness of the office, and to that inward purity that was necessary to a due discharge of the priestly calling.

Duties.

The chief duty of the priests was to offer or present offerings and sacrifices to God. Both those for the nation,

which were offered at stated times, and those for individuals. They had to kill the victims (at least the national ones), sprinkle and pour out their blood, and burn their carcasses, or part of them, on the altar. They had the charge of the altar and the sanctuary ; they had to see that the fire was ever burning on the altar ; they made loaves of shewbread, trimmed and lighted the lamps of the golden candlestick, and evening and morning burnt incense on the golden altar, and, in general, conducted the sacred services of the tabernacle worship. Their duties were not, however, confined to the performance of the rites and ceremonies of that worship, for the law being committed to their custody, they, with the Levites, were intrusted with the religious instruction of the nation : " He shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law" (Deut. xxxiii. 10) ; and the people were exhorted to seek knowledge at the priest's lips.

The whole tribe of Levi was given to the priests to assist them in their sacred work. The mere Levite was not permitted to perform any strictly priestly act. He could not offer up the sacrifices, pour out or sprinkle the blood, or burn incense on the golden altar ; but he could do much, as the servant of the priest, in assisting him in his multifarious duties. Without the aid of the Levites, the priests could not have overtaken all the work that was assigned them.

Maintenance.

The priests were not permitted to follow any secular calling. Their time was entirely devoted to their sacred work, hence it was necessary and just that their maintenance should be provided for at the expense of those for whose spiritual and temporal welfare they ministered. The remuneration consisted principally of the redemption money paid for the first-born Israelites, the first-fruits of the field, the fruit of trees in the fourth year, parts of various of the offerings, and a tenth of the tithes which fell to the Levites. They were not able, of course, to reap all these dues till they reached the promised land.

The Priests' Garments.

Breeches.

The breeches or drawers were made of fine twined linen, and reached from the loins to the thighs. As they do not seem to have been necessary in order to prevent exposure, that end being secured by other means, the significant phrase, "to cover the naked flesh," may mean that they were intended to be an incentive to chastity, by reminding the priests that they could not perform their sacred duties so as to be acceptable to God, unless all impure thoughts were banished from the mind, and all carnal desires from the heart (Exod. xxviii. 42; xxxix. 28). Had the sons of Eli given due heed to the warning voice of this covering, they never would have been the means, by committing the sin of fornication, of breaking the neck of their aged father, and of bringing upon themselves a dishonoured and untimely death.

The Coat or Tunic.

The coat was a long robe, with sleeves, and reaching from the neck to the ankles, and made of fine twined linen. It was the undermost official garment, with the exception of the breeches. It was the work of the weaver; not merely the cloth, but the robe itself, was woven in the loom. The Egyptians, with whose arts the Hebrews were well acquainted, knew and practised the weaving of whole garments. It was a broidered coat (a kind of checker work), being variegated with squares in the process of weaving (Exod. xxviii. 4, 39; xxxix. 27).

This article of dress, being entirely white, might well remind the priests of the spotless purity of Him whose servants they were, the sacred nature of their duties, and of the necessity of their hearts being pure, as well as their coat, when engaged in their sacred calling.

The Girdle.

The girdle was made of fine twined linen, and beautifully embroidered with blue and purple and scarlet yarn with the needle. The Bible does not say how long or broad it was, but, according to tradition, it was 3 or 4 fingers broad, and 32 cubits long, and was wound many times round the body above the coat at the breast, where it was tied, and from which it hung down to the feet. It was an article of Eastern dress, and bound the outer or loose garments to the body, and served to hold up the skirts of that robe when the wearer was engaged in walking or running, or other exercises that might be impeded by them; hence the phrase, "To gird the loins." From this circumstance, it became an emblem of readiness for duty or work. The girdle, therefore, was an article of dress well calculated to impress upon the priests the necessity of ever being in a state of readiness to perform the rites of their sacred calling, and of banishing all such thoughts from the mind, and all such obstacles out of the way, as might in the least impede them in their ministrations. Thus, they would be girt for their work (Exod. xxviii. 4, 40; xxxix. 29).

The Bonnet.

The bonnet was made of swathes or bands of linen, doubled round many times and sewed together, and so fashioned as to fit close to the head. The seams were hid by an outer covering of linen. In shape, it is supposed to have resembled a crown. It was made of the same pure white linen yarn as the rest of the garments (Exod. xxviii. 40). It was the crowning article of attire. The head, as well as the rest of the body of the priest, was clothed in white. May this not have been intended to teach him, that in exercising his office, he should aim at the entire consecration of all the members of his body, and especially all the faculties of his mind, of which the head was the temple,

and if so, it should ever have been reminding him that it was necessary to the acceptable execution of the duties of his office, that he exercised the mind with holy thoughts, and thus effectually guard it against the entrance of evil ones.

The breeches, coat, girdle, and bonnet, formed the official dress of the common priests, and had a comely and lovely appearance, the coat being embroidered, and the girdle shining resplendent with bright colours. This dress, as well as the more gorgeous one of the high priest, was, "for glory and for beauty." He whom those white-robed priests typified, was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. He offered Himself without spot to God. Those whom He has made a "kingdom of priests" are clothed inwardly with that white linen which is the righteousness of saints; and hereafter they will tread the courts of the heavenly temple arrayed in white robes, and with palms of victory in their hands.

Dear reader, be not forgetful of the symbolic import of the white garments. Be reminded by the drawers, that unchaste thoughts and carnal desires must not be suffered a lodgment in the mind and heart, for, "if we regard iniquity in our heart, the Lord will not hear us." Be reminded by the embroidered coat, that in order to render acceptable service to God, you must have clean hands and a pure heart: "The Lord requireth truth in the inward parts." Be reminded by the girdle, that you should ever be in a state of readiness for any duty to which the Master may call you, so that when you hear His voice, you may be able to reply, "Lord, here am I." Be reminded by the bonnet, of the necessity of shutting the door of the mind against vain and sinful thoughts, and of occupying it with holy thoughts and heavenly meditations.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HIGH PRIEST'S GARMENTS.

THE high priest was over all the other priests. He could perform any of the duties of the priesthood, but his peculiar and exclusive duty was that of officiating on the great day of annual atonement. None but he could enter the holy of holies. His was the office of greatest solemnity and highest dignity ever held by mortal man.

The Blue Robe.

The robe was made of blue yarn, and was an entire piece of woven work (Exod. xxviii. 31-35); not only the cloth, but the garment itself being fashioned in the loom. It had no sleeves, but there were slits at the sides for the arms to pass through, and at the top, in the middle, was a hole large enough for the passage of the head. The rim of the hole was strengthened by a border to prevent the mantle from being rent. Around the hem was a very splendid fringe, composed of tassels, in the form of pomegranates and golden bells. Between every two pomegranates there was a bell, so that a pomegranate and a bell alternated, there being an equal number of both. The pomegranate is a globe-shaped fruit, of a darkish red colour, and about the size of an orange. It was, and still

is, much valued in the East. The imitation ones on the hem of the robe were made of coloured yarn. When the high priest moved, the bells would make a tinkling sound. This was intended, and the reason is given: "His sound shall be heard when he goeth into the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not (Exod. xxviii. 35). It is not plain what was intended or signified by "His sound being heard." It may mean, that were the high priest to enter or withdraw from the holy place without giving notice, it might be deemed irreverent, and that the tinkling sound of the bells was the appointed means of intimating his approach as well as his withdrawal. This would mark the very great solemnity of coming near to God, and would also denote the deep reverence with which it became the high priest to exercise the privilege. The sound might also be intended to intimate to those within hearing of it, and through them by signs to others, that the high priest was on his way to offer incense, the period between the sound ceasing and again commencing being that in which he was actually engaged in the work of intercession. While he was so engaged, worshippers in the court, and even many beyond it, to whom by signs it might be made known that incense was being offered up, might, with the intercessions on their behalf at the golden altar, unite their own supplications, and thus cause to arise, with the evening and morning incense, their united prayers. It was customary for the people to pray at the time of incense (Luke i. 9).

The robe was all blue; the under robe or coat, all white. The latter, as already noticed, was an emblem of purity or negative holiness, by which is meant absence of sin, as distinguished from the exercise of holiness and the fruit it yields; the former, the blue robe, may be intended as an emblem of active holiness as exhibited in the fruits of righteousness and the gifts and graces that should adorn the child of God. The pomegranates around the hem of the robe favour this suggestion. If this be a right view, then

the blue robe might be intended to remind the high priest, that not only heart purity, but active virtue, was looked for in a high degree in him, and that he should constantly be aiming and striving after heavenly attainments. Jesus, our great High Priest, was not only spotless, but His whole life was adorned, as that of no mere man's ever was, by good words and good works. No man ever spoke, and no man ever worked, like Jesus. Though He has entered the true holy of holies, He ceases not, nor ever will, to exert His influence for those whom He has redeemed with His precious blood. He ever liveth to make intercession for them. His praying people need no tinkling sound of golden bells to inform them when He is about to intercede on their behalf. They know that He ever stands pleading for them at the golden altar before the heavenly throne. Every sweet assurance of salvation they feel, every blessing that descends from heaven upon their souls, and every impulse to holiness that quickens their hearts, are so many sweet sounds all softly whispering to them, that they have an advocate with the Father within the vail.

The Ephod and the Curious Girdle.

If we except the breastplate, the ephod was the high priest's outermost garment, being worn above the blue robe. It was a costly and magnificent vestment, made of the richest materials, viz., of gold wire, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and the finest undyed yarn (Exod. xxviii. 6-15; xxxix. 2-6); and the workmanship was of the most superior kind; "cunning work," that is, of the skilful weaver, the same as that of the cherubim curtains and the inner vail, in which cherubs were interwoven. From this circumstance it is not unlikely that ornamental figures of some kind, such as flowers, were interwoven in this very splendid piece of dress. It consisted of two pieces, one for the front, which is supposed to have reached nearly to the knees; the other, for the corresponding space of the back. The two parts were united above by straps from before and from

behind, which met and formed a junction at the shoulders by means of the onyx stones, which acted as a kind of button or clasp; hence the straps are called the shoulder pieces. On each shoulder was one of these precious stones, with the names of the twelve tribes engraven, six on the one, and six on the other, according to their birth. The girdle appears to have been woven along with the ephod, and to have formed one piece with it. It served to unite the two parts of the ephod below, and to bind it close to the body. The girdle was manufactured with the same materials as the ephod, but the ornamental or flowered work seems to have been somewhat different, and to have been very peculiar. It is called the "Curious Girdle of the Ephod."

The chief design of the ephod appears to have been to bear up the onyx stones. The ephod was made for them, not they for it. The high priest, who was charged with the interests of all the tribes, by having these stones, with the twelve names of the children of Israel engraven on them, upon his shoulders, very significantly, though figuratively, bore the people on his shoulders. He was constantly reminded, by the precious gems, that it was his duty to care for the children of Israel, and to strive after their welfare. The situation of these stones, may also, on account of its conspicuousness, have been meant to render the jewels easily seen by all within near view of the high priest. "Thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial" (Exod. xxviii. 12).

Our Great High Priest is charged with the interests of all His people. "The government shall be upon His shoulder" (Isa. ix. 6). The eye of faith of the humblest of His people, while they tread the outer courts here, may penetrate through the vail into the holiest of all, and there behold Jesus, and discern that He cares for them;

yea, read their very names deep graven on the palms of His hands. Every breath of the Holy Spirit that is breathed upon their souls, is a fresh token that the Great Intercessor is attending to their interests.

Dear reader, if you are a child of God, you may well rejoice when you ponder the precious truth that the Great High Priest bears you on His shoulders, and that however many and weighty your varied interests may be, His strength can never fail, for He is an Almighty friend. No load too heavy for Him to bear. Remember, however, that if you would benefit by His mediation, you must ever keep looking to Him as your only Priest and Saviour, and ever keep rolling all the burdens of your soul over on Him. He invites you to do so—"Come unto me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The Breastplate.

The breastplate was the high priest's outermost article of dress, and worn above the ephod, to which it was so closely bound that the two appeared to form but one resplendent piece of attire. It was made of the same costly materials as the ephod, and, like it, was the workmanship of the skilful weaver. The rich cloth woven for it was two spans long, and one broad (Exod. xxviii. 15-30; xxxix. 8-21). But, as the cloth was doubled to render the fabric sufficiently strong to bear the gems which were set in it, the breastplate, when made, was but one span square (about 9 or 10 inches). Three rows, of four each, of very precious stones in gold settings, were inserted in this square, having engraven on them the names of the twelve sons of Jacob—one on each stone, probably as in the case of the two onyx stones, according to their age. The stones were of various hues and degrees of brilliancy, and were esteemed of great value, even more so in ancient times than now. The breastplate was suspended from the shoulders by cords made of gold threads twined together, the ends of which were fixed to the ouches of gold on the

shoulders, and to rings of gold at the upper corners of the breastplate on the outside: by this means it was kept close to the ephod above. Below, it was tied and kept firmly bound to the ephod by ribbons of blue, which passed through gold rings on the outside of the breastplate at its under corners, and corresponding rings on the ephod a little above the curious girdle.

Urim and Thummim

(Lights and Perfections).

Moses was commanded to put into the breastplate of judgment the urim and thummim. Whatever these were, their names signify light and perfection. Some tell us they were two small images, which God gave to Moses on the mount. But there is not a word in Scripture to justify this supposition. Others inform us that they were three small stones, with "Yes" inscribed on one of them, "No" on another, and that the remaining one had no word on it. When the high priest entered the holy place to consult Jehovah, he put his questions so as to receive a simple negative or affirmative. Having put a question, he put his hand into the breastplate (which those holding the opinion we are now considering say was open at the top like a bag or pouch). Should he happen to take out the stone with "Yes" on it, "Yes" was the answer to his question; if the one with "No" on it, "No" was the reply; and if it should happen to be the blank stone, that one intimated that he was to receive no answer. This opinion is contrary to the Scriptures, which again and again tell us that the responses were given in an audible voice. Another view, taken by some writers, is that the twelve gems of the breastplate constituted the urim and thummim, and that the responses of Jehovah to the inquiries of the high priest were given by means of those of the letters on the precious stones, intended to spell out the answers, becoming supernaturally illuminated. To this opinion it is objected that the urim and thummim were some things which were put "in," and not

"on," the breastplate. This, however, is no valid objection, for the word "in" in the text admits, without the least straining, of being rendered on, and is so rendered in "Young's New Translation of the Bible." There is this fatal objection, however, that the responses are not in accordance with the Word of God, which, as already noticed, says they were given in an audible voice. I lean to the opinion that the precious stones constituted the urim and thummim, but not by reason of any supernatural illuminations of the letters, but that the stones rendered the breastplate that ornament or badge which qualified the high priest for making inquiries of Jehovah. "They shall be upon Aaron's heart when he goeth in before the Lord." As one purpose to serve by consulting Jehovah was to give righteous decisions in difficult cases, the breastplate is probably on that account called the "Breastplate of Judgment."

The precious stones may have received the collective name of "urim and thummim:" *1st*, On their own account. Of all earthly objects these precious stones are the most lustrous, and emit light of themselves. Like the stars they shine in the darkest night, and for that reason they have been called the "stars of earth." Are they not, then, well called lights? Thummim signifies perfection. The stones, from their brilliancy, purity, and uncommon beauty, are perhaps the most striking emblems which earthly objects furnish of truth or perfection, and are therefore not inappropriately named "thummim." *2d*, On account of their being the badge or ornament which it was necessary for the high priest to wear when he consulted Jehovah. The object of the high priest was to get light on some dark subject, or to arrive at the truth on some matter he could not discover otherwise, or to give a righteous decision in cases in which his knowledge or wisdom was deficient, and such as would accord with innocence and justice. For these reasons the gems seem to be appropriately called "urim and thummim." *3d*, On account of their representing the children of Israel. The names of all the tribes

being on the stones—one name on each—the Israelites might see in these stones an emblem of what it was designed they should become, before they were meet for being worshippers in the heavenly Temple ; and the high priest might be reminded by them that his mission was to bring the pious Israelites into that state of perfection. Like these gems, man by nature is of the earth earthy. Both have their origin in mother earth. Yet both, when polished, may shine like the stars of the firmament. Every Israelite when he looked upon, or thought of, these shining gems, should have been humbled on account of sin which dimned the original beauty and lustre of his soul, and have sought, by faith in the appointed means of restoration, the services of the sanctuary, and by constant effort, in dependence on Divine aid, to have his soul made bright and beautiful, like the resplendent stones of the breastplate ; and the high priest's constant aim should have been to bring the people into this state of beauty and perfection.

This splendid jewelled ornament being worn right over the high priest's heart, may have been intended to teach him that it was his duty not only to care for the people, as the onyx stones on his shoulders taught him, but also to love them. He was to have a place in his heart, as well as on his shoulders, for all the tribes of Israel.

The Aaronic priests were not perfect, and were liable to fail in their duties, both in caring for, and loving the people. But believers have a great and perfect High Priest—one who bears the names of all His children deep graven on His heart, and who never, for a single moment, can forget any one of them, even the humblest; and who shows His care for them by His continual intercession before the heavenly throne, and while He pleads his heart is ever beating with affection for them. He can fully sympathise with them in all their wants, sorrows, and afflictions : it is a human heart that beats in the bosom of their Divine friend. Blessed are those who know, in their happy expe-

rience, that Jesus is their Priest and Saviour. The pious Israelite rejoiced with a glad heart as he looked at the high priest, on whose breast the name of his own tribe was shining, for by that he knew that he had an interest in his mediation; but how much greater should be the joy of the child of God now, when, by the eye of faith, he can look into the very heart of Jesus, and read his name deep graven there. If the pious Israelite, when he beheld the brilliant jewels, looked upon them as emblems of the light and purity and beauty of the soul, as restored to the image of God, through faith in the atoning and intercessory work of the high priest, and was excited by it to strive after attaining to heavenly perfection, shall not the disciple of Jesus, when his eye penetrates through the vail into the holiest of all, and beholds not mere glittering gems decking the bosom of his High Priest, but Christ himself all radiant with light and perfection, as the glorious object he is destined to resemble, be encouraged by the view to strain every nerve to attain to the likeness of that perfect pattern?

The Mitre

Was the high priest's head-dress, and, like the goodly bonnets, was made of fine linen; and, though bearing a different name, probably resembled them, or nearly so, in shape, which is supposed to have been like a crown. A plate of gold, in the form of a flower, with the words "Holiness to the Lord" inscribed on it, was fastened with a blue ribbon to the forefront of the mitre (Exod. xxviii. 36-39; xxxix. 30-32). This was the mitre's grand characteristic, and distinguished it from the bonnet of the common priest.

This beautiful plate, with its inscription, "Holiness to the Lord," was a most appropriate finish to the garments for glory and beauty. Every article of attire uttered the sentiment of that inscription—no words could have excelled them. The design of the office of the priesthood was comprised in them. The Israelites were taught by

them that it was their duty to devote themselves to God by a holy life. It is our duty too. May the words, "Holiness to the Lord," shine on all we say and on all we do. May our persons and property bear the beautiful inscription. May our chief end ever be to glorify God.

When we think of the beautiful words glittering on the high priest's mitre, can we forget Him who has given us the best commentary on them when He said: "My meat and my drink is to do the will of Him who sent me," and whose obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, affords their brightest illustration.

"See Aaron, God's anointed priest,
Within the vail appear,
In robes of mystic meaning drest,
Presenting Israel's prayer.

"The plate of gold which crowns his brows,
His holiness describes;
His breast displays, in shining rows,
The names of all the tribes.

"With the atoning blood he stands
Before the mercy-seat;
And clouds of incense from his hands
Arise with odour sweet.

"Urim and Thummim near his heart,
In rich engravings worn,
The sacred light of truth impart,
To teach and to adorn.

"Through him the eye of faith descries
A greater priest than he;
Thus Jesus pleads above the skies,
For you, my friends, and me.

"He bears the names of all His saints
Deep on His heart engraved;
Attentive to the state and wants
Of all His love has saved.

"In Him a holiness complete,
Light and perfections shine;
And wisdom, grace, and glory meet;
A Saviour all Divine.

"The blood, which as a priest He bears
For sinners, is His own;
The incense of His prayers and tears
Perfumes the holy throne.

"In Him my weary soul has rest,
Though I am weak and vile;
I read my name upon His breast,
And see the Father smile."*

* This beautiful hymn describes the high priest within the vail, attired in the robes peculiar to his office; but this is incorrect, as he never appeared there in other than the white garments.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LEVITES.

THE various duties connected with the Tabernacle worship were far too numerous for Aaron and his sons to overtake; even the preparing of the sacrifices for the altar involved an amount of physical labour far beyond their strength. It is evident, then, that they needed assistance. God might have given them as helps, all the first-born sons of the Israelites, in whom, ever since the eventful night in Egypt when the first-born sons of the Egyptians were smitten dead by the destroying angel, and the first-born of the Israelites spared alive, He had claimed a peculiar right, but in His infinite wisdom, He saw meet in their place to give the priests a whole tribe (Num. iii. 12), that of Levi, to which Moses and Aaron belonged, an arrangement which had many obvious advantages.

The tribe of Levi numbered 22,000 (Num. iii. 39); the first-born Israelites, 22,273 (Num. iii. 43), so that they were nearly equal. The 273 first-born sons, in excess of the Levites, were by Divine permission redeemed at the rate of five shekels each (Num. iii. 46-51). Of the 22,000 Levites, about 8000 were qualified by age to enter on the duties of their office (Num. viii. 23-26).

The Levites were solemnly set apart to their office by

Aaron. Having shaved all their flesh and washed their clothes, they were sprinkled with holy water, and then presented as a national offering to the Lord—the nation's representatives—the elders of the respective tribes—putting their hands upon them, thereby signifying that the people gave them to the Lord in place of the first-born. After being thus transferred to the Lord, two bullocks were offered as sacrifices, the one for a sin-offering and the other for a burnt-offering (Num. viii. 5-23).

Whatever assistance the priests might require to enable them to overtake their sacred work, the Levites were ever at hand to render it. Sceptics would not be so bold in asserting that it was impossible for Aaron and his sons to do all the work connected with the sacrifices, if they had not wilfully shut their eyes to this fact. It is true the mere Levite could not offer up the sacrifices, sprinkle the blood, burn incense or perform other priestly acts; but in helping to prepare the victims for the altar, and in numerous other ways, he might lawfully assist in the religious services of the Tabernacle.

In the wilderness the Levites had the sole charge of taking down and putting up the Tabernacle, and of transporting it from one place of encampment to another (Num. iv.). At one time the Levites may have been seen busy in the Tabernacle court, waiting on the priests and helping them in their work; at another time, taking down the sacred structure; at another, transporting it and its holy vessels through the wilderness; and at another, rearing it in some new place of encampment; but their duties were not confined to such services as these, for to them, with the priests, the religious instruction of the nation was confided: "They shall teach Jacob thy judgments and Israel thy law" (Deut. xxxiii. 10). These were among the dying words of Moses, and there are numerous passages of Scripture illustrating them, showing that the Levites as well as the priests taught the people (2 Chron. xvii. 7-9; xx. 19-22).

When the children of Israel were settled in the promised

land, and the Tabernacle fixed for long periods in the same place, the Levites were relieved of a very burdensome part of their labours, that of transporting the Tabernacle from place to place, so that there was no longer any necessity for them all being in attendance at the house of the Lord, and consequently they were formed into divisions and waited on the priests in turn.

When disengaged at the sanctuary, the Levites resided in the Levitical cities which were situated in all the tribal territories, not however passing their time in mere recreation, but employing it in divers ways for the moral and spiritual welfare of the people. They read and explained the law, assisted the elders in the different towns in the administration of justice, took charge of the cities of refuge, whither those who had sinned through ignorance fled for safety. Dwelling in the midst of every tribe, they were everywhere at hand to explain the law, instruct the ignorant, comfort the afflicted, shield the innocent, punish the guilty, and generally to guide the people in the way they should go (Deut. xvii. 8-12 ; xxxiii. 10).

Charged with so many highly-important duties, the Levites must have possessed immense influence, and, when animated with the spirit of their office, and with love to God and man, could not fail in maintaining and advancing the best interests of the kingdom of Israel.

With a view to the transference of the scene of worship from the Tabernacle to the Temple, David appointed a new arrangement of the Levites, in which we find that besides those who assisted the priests in the courts of the Lord's house, and instructed the nation, 4000 served as porters, and had charge of opening and shutting the gates, and of admitting only those who had a right to enter ; 4000 served as musicians and conducted the public praise ; and 6000 served as officers and judges (1 Chron xxiii.).

The Levites had no share in the division of the Holy Land, so that the eleven tribes got one-twelveth more territory among them on that account. Seeing that the Levites

got no land and were not permitted to follow a secular calling, it was not only right and fair, but bare justice that provision should be made for their maintenance. To this tribe (priests included) was assigned forty-eight cities (Josh. xxi). Besides these cities, one-tenth of the produce of the whole land was to be given to them (Num. xviii. 21; Deut. xviii. 1, 2; Neh. x. 37). By this arrangement the Levites got about the same quantity of the produce of the land as the share of the country that should have fallen to them would have yielded, had they participated in the division of Canaan. They were thus saved from the toils of cultivation, and the service rendered by the other tribes was no more than a fair equivalent for the higher and sacred services rendered by the Levites to the nation.

Many of the priests and Levites, no doubt, performed their duties to God and man so as to glorify the one and benefit the other, and thereby "purchased to themselves a good degree." And having, through the shadows of the old dispensation, led many an Israelite to look to the substance—Christ the one great sacrifice—they are now among the saints in glory, and shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. Others of the priests and Levites were not distinguished by that holiness which became their office; and at the time of our Saviour's advent, few, very few, were to be found executing the duties of their office with clean hands and a pure heart. But, blessed be God, there were still to be found, even then, some who walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. With all their sins and shortcomings the tribe of Levi, up to the time of our Saviour, were the custodiers of the Scriptures, which they read and explained in the synagogues, and thus were instrumental in keeping alive, however faintly, a knowledge of the true God, so that, with all, their defects this tribe was of signal service to the nation. By this wise separation of it to God, the light of true religion was kept burning amidst surrounding darkness; the

ritual services of the Tabernacle and Temple attended to; and at least a remnant was ever found, even in the worst times, to worship God in the beauty of holiness, and to magnify and declare His great name.

God has, in the Gospel dispensation, made provision for making known His will, instructing His people, and wafting the glad tidings of salvation—not to one nation only, but to all nations, and peoples, and tongues. But He has not seen meet under this, as under the old economy, to choose a particular tribe as His ministering servants in accomplishing these great ends; for while He has given pastors to His church, He has also appointed all believers New Testament Levites, and separated them from the rest of the world unto Himself. He calls upon them all to dedicate themselves to His service.

The Levites, when not on duty at the sanctuary, were scattered up and down the whole land, and thus became centres of light from which religious knowledge was diffused, but Christ's followers are scattered through all lands, shining as lights in the world, and by the grace of God hastening on the bright era of the millennium glory when all people will walk and rejoice in the light of Jacob.

> "The beam that shines from Sion hill
> Shall lighten ev'ry land."

If you have believed in Jesus, and would remain His disciple, you cannot escape His service. He claims you as really as He did the first-born Israelites, nay, He has stronger claims on you than He had on them. He spared them from the stroke of the angel of death, but He died on the cross that you might live for ever.

Do you then feel the paramount claims He has upon you? Do you court rather than shun His service? And are you often asking, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do." If so, then you are doubtless already in harness and aiding on the great work of building up the New Testament Church. Work on, whether in instructing little ones in the

Sabbath School, as missionary collectors, as tract distributors, or in any other way God in His providence has opened up to you. God speed your efforts to advance the kingdom of His dear son. Work on, ever looking upwards to your heavenly Father, and as you look, exclaiming, my sufficiency is of Thee, and He will bless you and your work, and receive you to himself at last with the joyful welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Never forget your high calling. Wherever you are, at home, or abroad, in the midst of saints or sinners, at all places and at all times, seek to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, by a walk and a conversation becoming the Gospel. The Levites, remember, were centres of light! You are also called upon to "Let your light shine." "Arise, shine." "Shine ye as lights in the world."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SACRIFICES UNDER THE LAW.

THE burnt offering, peace offering, sin offering, and trespass offering, were bloody sacrifices involving the slaying of oxen, sheep, goats, doves, and pigeons. The meat offerings were unbloody oblations, consisting of vegetable productions, such as corn, flour, meal, bread, cakes, oil, and salt.

Burnt Offerings.

This sacrifice was called a burnt offering, because, unlike all other forms of sacrifice, the whole of the body of the victims (the skin only excepted), was entirely consumed by the altar fire, and ascended in smoke to God. Only males were permitted to be offered as burnt sacrifices, but it was in the option of the offerer to bring any of the animals already named (Lev. i.), according as his piety might prompt him, or his means might admit of.

When an Israelite brought a bullock as his offering, he led it up to the Tabernacle door, where the priests, arrayed in their robes of office, were in attendance; and if on examination they declared it to be without blemish, that is, free from any of the disqualifying defects enumerated in Lev. xxii. 17-26, he was permitted to offer it to the Lord there, even before the entrance to the holy habi-

tation. Death was the penalty for offering sacrifices elsewhere.

This was in order to prevent idolatry. After putting his hand on the head of the victim, and by that solemn act devoting it to the Lord as his substitute or representative, he slew it, probably on the north side of the altar (Lev. i. 11)—the officiating priest receiving the blood, and sprinkling it around the under part of the altar. The sacrificer then skinned and cut up the carcass, in which duty he may have been assisted by Levites. The legs and inwards were washed with water and sprinkled with salt, and all the parts of the body (some say in nearly their natural order), were laid on the altar by the priest, and the whole being consumed by the fire, ascended in smoke to God, to whom it was of a sweet savour. The sprinkling of the blood, and the laying of the parts of the victim on the altar, principally constituted the presenting of the sacrifice. These solemn acts were among the peculiar duties of the priests, and which it was lawful for them only to perform.

A male sheep or goat brought as a burnt offering by an Israelite who may not have been able to afford a bullock, would be as acceptable as the latter, and was presented in the same manner, and with the like ceremonies as it. It is expressly said that the sheep or goat was slain on the north side of the altar.

A turtle dove, or young pigeon, brought by a poor man, was as efficacious as the offering of his richer neighbour; so that the rich and the poor met on a level at the altar. The priest, not the offerer, killed and prepared the bird for the altar. This, likely, was with a view to save the blood, to effect which great care and much practice were necessary.

The burnt-offering was evidently intended to be an expiatory sacrifice,—the victim bleeding, suffering, and dying for the sin of the offerer, in order that he might escape deserved punishment; "it was to make an atonement for him." It was a self-dedicatory offering as well, and

some are of opinion that self-dedication was pre-eminently its design—the entire body of the victim consumed on the altar being significant of the dedication of the offerer of himself to God. The reference in Rom. i. 1, is evidently to the burnt offering, and helps to confirm this view. The sin offerings and trespass offerings, on the other hand, were pre-eminently expiatory sacrifices. When several offerings were presented to God on the same occasion, the sin offering always took precedence—thus seeming to teach, that the offerers were first reconciled to God by the expiatory sacrifice (the sin-offering), before, by the burnt offering, they signified the dedication of themselves to Him (Lev. viii. 14-16; ix. 8-12; xvi. 35). It is also worthy of notice that the first sacrifice offered on the altar was a sin offering. The following are a few of many passages, which seem to teach that sin and sins were more intimately associated with sin offerings, than with burnt offerings (*compare* Lev. i. with Lev. iv. v. vi.; *see* Psalm xl. 6; Heb. v. 1; x. 6; Lev. viii. 14-16; ix. 8-12; xvi. 35).

Besides free-will burnt offerings which were brought, as individuals might be prompted, burnt offerings had to be offered by individuals at the removal of ceremonial uncleanness of different kinds (Lev. xii. 6; xiv. 19). The following were the public burnt offerings: daily (Exod. xxix. 38); weekly (Num. xxviii. 9-10); monthly (Num. xxviii. 11-16); yearly (Num. xxviii. 16-26, etc).

The burnt offering, as well as all the other animal sacrifices, typified the atoning death of Christ; indeed, apart from His death, that of the various victims slain at the altar had no meaning. The self-dedicatory character of this offering was strikingly fulfilled in the life of Christ. His every word and act while on earth showed how entirely he was devoted to the will of His Father. "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business." "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me

to do." These were memorable utterances of Him, whose whole life from the manger to the cross was one continual burnt offering.

Christians can in no sense fulfil the expiatory aspect of the burnt sacrifice. He who trod the "wine-press alone," has done that once for all by His atoning death. Their duty is to be constantly looking by faith to Him as crucified for them, and to be continually striving, in their daily life, to fulfil the self-dedicatory aspect of the offering. "Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

The Meat Offering.

When the Scriptures were translated into English, "meat" did not mean "flesh" as it does now, but food in general. The following were varieties of meat offerings: 1*st*, A meat offering of flour, upon which oil has been poured. 2*d*, A meat offering baked in the oven, consisting of unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. 3*d*, A meat offering of fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil, and baked in a pan. When baked it was parted in pieces, and oil poured on it—the oil being used as butter is with us on bread. 4*th*, A meat-offering made of fine flour, with oil, and baked in the frying-pan. 5*th*, A meat-offering of first fruits—"Green ears of corn dried by the fire," with oil and frankincense (Lev. ii.).

The offerer brought his offering—one or other of the foregoing—to the priest, who took a part of it, called a "memorial," which he laid on the altar to be burnt. All the frankincense laid on an offering was burnt. What remained of the offerings after the memorial or the Lord's part was taken out of them, belonged to the priest. No

honey or leaven was allowed to be mixed with the meat offerings (ver. 11), but salt (ver. 13) was applied to them all. Leaven, though useful in making bread, has a tendency to corruption. Leavened bread will only keep a few days at most, while unleavened bread will keep a long time. This, probably, was the reason that leaven was forbidden in the offerings. Salt has quite an opposite tendency; it is a powerful preservative, and, as applied to the offerings, was designed to show the enduring nature of the covenant between God and the Hebrews. Drink offerings of wine commonly accompanied meat offerings, but were never offered separately; and both formed part of the stated public sacrifices offered daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly (Num. xxviii.).

By bringing a meat offering, an Israelite dedicated to God a part of the choicest of those temporal mercies which constituted his daily bread, and by that act acknowledged that he was indebted to his Maker not only for that sample of His bounties but for the stock, even for all that he possessed.

Although God did not stand in need of food, yet these gifts were of a sweet savour to Him, and His ministering servants were nourished by them—the greater portion going to them, it being only a small part (the "memorial," or God's part) that was burnt on the altar.

Christians should evince their gratitude to God for daily mercies, by bringing gifts and laying them on the New Testament altar. "To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Peace Offering.

Peace offerings were taken from the herd or from the flock, and consisted of the same kind of animals that formed the burnt offerings, and, like them, required to be without blemish; but they might either be male or female (Lev. iii.). They were skinned and slain, and their blood sprinkled in the same manner as the burnt offerings, but

only the fatty parts were burnt. The priests got the breast and the right shoulder (Lev. vii. 31-34), which, from the peculiar way they had to present these to the Lord, the one being lifted or heaved up and down, and the other waved to and fro from right to left in the air (ver. 30, 32), were called the "heave" and "wave" offerings. All that remained of the carcass belonged to the offerer, who might invite his friends and the poor to feast on it along with him. The priests ate their own portion, and the altar fire devoured God's part. The offering being thus shared between these three parties, and each of them partaking of it, signified their being at peace, and holding communion together—thence the offering is appropriately called a peace offering.

Peace offerings of a national character, and on a grand scale, were sometimes offered (Lev. ix. 18; Josh. viii. 31; 2 Sam. vi. 17; 1 Kings viii. 63), etc.

Although this offering had an expiatory character, its main design does not appear to have been to make atonement for sins, nor to represent the self-dedication of the offerer to God, but rather to express thankfulness to God. Hence it is sometimes called a "thank offering." An Israelite wishing to express thankfulness to God for mercies received, might do so by bringing a peace offering; or, if he wished to supplicate for blessings, he brought the same form of offerings, thus thanking God for past favours, while soliciting new ones. Peace offerings also accompanied the making of vows. These offerings were evidently intended to keep alive, in the bosoms of the Israelites, the combined flame of gratitude, piety, and charity.

The Sin Offering and the Trespass Offering.

The "burnt offering" represented chiefly the dedication of the offerer of himself to God; the "meat offering" was a dedication to God of a portion of the good things with which the offerer had been favoured by providence; the "peace offering" was expressive of the offerer's gratitude

to God for mercies received, or of his desire or prayer for new ones. The "burnt offering" and the "peace offering" had also, as we have seen, an expiatory character, but this does not appear to have been their main feature. But the main idea of the "sin offering," and the "trespass offering," was that of expiation. These sacrifices were offered for the expiation of certain specified sins (Lev. iv. v. vi.).

The Sin Offering.

The animals used for sin offerings, with the exception of birds, were the same as those for burnt offerings. The particular one, however, which the offerer was required to bring, was prescribed by the law, yet with an obvious regard to his position in the commonwealth (Lev. iv. 3-28).

The Priest's Offering.

A priest who had committed any of the specified sins, brought a young bullock, without blemish (Lev. iv. 3-13), to the door of the Tabernacle, and there, putting his hands on its head, confessed audibly (according to Jewish writers) the sin of which he was guilty, and for which he desired it to make atonement. Having slain it, he carried its blood into the Holy Place, and there sprinkled the blood seven times before the vail of the sanctuary, rubbed some of it on each of the horns of the golden altar, and on returning to the court, poured out the residue at the foot of the brazen altar. After this, he took off from the carcass the fatty parts, and put them on the altar, where they were burnt, and ascended in smoke to God. The fatty parts, next to the blood of the animal, were considered the most precious. All that remained (the head, the flesh, the legs, and the dung), he was required to carry (of course with the assistance of the Levites) out of the court, and beyond the camp, to a clean place, where the ashes from the altar were poured out, and there burnt.

The Sin Offering for the Congregation.

The sin offering for the whole congregation was the same as that for the priest—a young bullock without blemish (Lev. iv. 13-22). It was brought by the representatives of the congregation, the elders, who put their hands on its head, confessing, as they did so, the particular sins of which the people had been guilty. It was slain either by the elders or the priest. The ceremony of sprinkling the blood, burning the fatty parts on the altar, and removing the remainder of the carcass beyond the camp, was the same as in the case of the priest's offering.

The Ruler's Sin Offering.

The ruler's offering was a young he-goat (Lev. iv. 22-27). Having put his hands on its head, and confessed his sins over it, he slew it. The priest having received the blood, dipped his finger in it, and rubbed it on the horns of the altar of burnt offerings, and then poured out what was left over at the foot of the altar. After this, he burnt the fatty parts of the animal on the altar fire. What remained of the victim was not carried beyond the camp, as was the case with the priests' and congregation's offerings, but became the property of the priests, who feasted upon it in the Holy Place.

The Common Person's Offering.

If one of the common people had sinned, the law prescribed for his offering either a young she-goat or a she-lamb (Lev. iv. 27-35). It was presented to God in the same way, and with the like ceremony as the ruler's offering.

The sprinkling of the blood before the vail, and the carrying of the carcass beyond the camp to be burnt, in the cases of the priests' and congregation's offerings, was intended to denote that the sins of the priests were more heinous than the same sins committed by a private Israelite;

and that the sins of a whole congregation were more heinous than the same sins when committed by a single individual.

The Trespass Offering.

It is not easy to distinguish, in some cases, between the sins and offences for which the law prescribed a "trespass offering," or a "sin offering," but you will find the particular sins for both classes of sacrifices enumerated in Lev. iv., v., and vi. "Sin offerings," we have seen, might be brought by priest, congregation, ruler, or private person, but trespass offerings were only to be brought by individuals (Lev. v. 1-19). The usual animal for a trespass offering was a young she-goat or she-lamb, but a poor person was permitted to bring two turtle doves or young pigeons—the one to be offered as a trespass offering, and the other as a burnt offering; or, if he was too poor to offer these, the law mercifully admitted of his bringing instead a meat offering of fine flour, and which was not regarded as a meat offering, but as a trespass offering, and hence had an expiatory character which the ordinary meat offering had not. Although a she-lamb or she-goat was the usual trespass offering, yet some trespasses looked upon as peculiarly heinous, such as those, "in the holy things of the Lord," required the sacrificer to bring a ram.

The sacrifices under the law effected the temporal remission of punishment, but they could not cleanse the soul from the guilt of sin, nor purchase spiritual and eternal blessings; for "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. x. 4; ix. 12-16). An Israelite, who, by sinning, had incurred the penalty of death, provided he had not sinned presumptuously (that is knowingly, wilfully, and deliberately), on bringing the prescribed offering, was pardoned (Lev. iv. 20, 26, 31, 35; Num. xv. 28, etc.); or, one who had become unclean either by violations of the ceremonial law or otherwise, and, in consequence, had been banished from the encampment, on bringing the prescribed sacrifice, was cleansed and restored

to his place in the congregation (Lev. xiii. 46; xiv.; xv; Num. xii. 15), and in general, to the individual or nation sacrificing, as the case might be, were continued those distinguished temporal blessings and privileges which as a people the Hebrews enjoyed. To what extent the bulk of the nation understood the typical import of the sacrifices we are not informed; but it cannot be doubted that these sacrifices were means of grace to pious Israelites, who were sincerely striving after deliverance not merely from the temporal punishment of sin, but also from its spiritual and eternal penal consequences. Such Israelites had glimpses through these types of the coming Messiah, and by faith in Him as their sin offering to be sacrificed for them, had their consciences purged from the guilt of sin by virtue of His atoning blood. Seeing the promises afar off, they embraced them. Some, no doubt, had stronger faith and saw with greater clearness than others. Job could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" and the seraphic Isaiah depicted the great sacrifice as distinctly as if with his bodily eyes he had witnessed the crucifixion.

The bloody sacrifices, and especially the sin offerings, prefigured the offering of Christ for the sins of men. The animals were innocent, so was He who died, not for His own, but others' sins. Some of them were not only innocent, but patient, meek, and gentle; and He whom they prefigured was meek and lowly. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." The animals were without blemish, and He whom they typified was "without spot," "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." The eyes, not of erring priests, but those of the all-seeing Jehovah, searches the great victim, and finds no fault in Him: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The sacrificer put his hands on the head of the devoted animal, symbolically transferring his guilt to it. On Jesus hath been laid "the iniquity of us all." The animals were slain. He is the Lamb of God

"slain from the foundation of the world." They bled. Behold the blood flowing from the riven side of the Redeemer. The sprinkling of the blood was the most solemn act of the priestly office. The blood was considered the life of the animal, and it redeemed the forfeited life of the offerer. So Christ's blood shed, signifies His life given for sinners: "Who gave Himself a ransom for all." His blood sprinkled on a sinner's conscience saves from spiritual and eternal death. What of the victim's body was burned on the altar prefigured the sufferings of Him who groaned and bled on Calvary's cross. The carcass of the animal, in the cases of the priests' and congregation's offerings being burnt beyond the camp, denoted the heinousness of sin when committed by these parties; and so Christ was crucified not within but beyond the walls of Jerusalem ("without the gate" Heb. xiii. 12); thus signifying that the sins for which He suffered were of the deepest dye, and those not of a nation merely, but of people of every nation; for "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John ii. 2). An Israelite having sinned, could escape the punishment (if it were death) by no other means than by sacrifice; or having contracted ceremonial uncleanness, could not be restored to his place in the congregation, or be allowed to visit the courts of God's house, unless he brought the prescribed bloody offering. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." This speaks to us with no uncertain sound of the "great sacrifice," and of His precious blood as that alone which can give peace to a troubled conscience, and save sinners from spiritual and eternal death, and gain admission for them at last into the courts of the heavenly temple. Blessed be God, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Have you peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? If not, remember there is salvation in no other. If you continue to reject Him, your iniquity must remain for ever on your own head, and you will never be able to

escape from an avenging God, nor from an accusing conscience, nor from the pains of hell. Escape for your life from so terrible a doom. Escape now, to-morrow may be too late. The gate of the court with the beautiful inscription, "The Door of Mercy," inscribed on its portals, is still open, and if you bend your ear you will hear the sweet voice of Him who is priest, sacrifice, and altar, all in one, inviting you to enter and approach, in these winsome words: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Do enter, we entreat you; and drawing near to Him, and, putting your hands on His devoted head, say—

"I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God;
He bears them all and frees us,
From the accursed load.
I bring my guilt to Jesus,
To wash my crimson stains
White in His blood most precious
Till not a spot remains."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DAILY SERVICE.

THE priests began their morning duties by removing the ashes which had accumulated in consequence of the burnt offering of the previous evening, to the place appointed for them beyond the camp (Lev. vi. 10, 11). After this, having washed at the laver, and put on their official robes—the garments for glory and beauty—they were ready to begin the work of daily atonement. The altar fire is now blazing, and its curling smoke ascending heavenwards. There stands Aaron resplendent in his golden vestments, the jewels on his breast sparkling in the morning sun, and beside him are his sons attired in raiment pure and white. The worshippers who are now entering the court are the national representatives (the elders). At length a lamb is led to the door of the Tabernacle, where it is carefully examined by the priests; and, being a male of the first year, and without spot or defect, it is declared to be a proper victim, and is led to the north side of the altar and there slain, and its body burnt in the same manner as the private burnt offerings already described. A meat offering of flour mingled with oil, and a drink offering of wine, accompanied the burnt offering (Exod. xxix. 38-46).

The other principal part of the morning service was the

offering of incense. The high priest, or other priest allotted to this duty, entered the Holy Place in the morning. His first business was with the golden candlestick. He trimmed its lamps one by one, removing any dust or other defilement that may have gathered on it during the night, so that it might stand pure and spotless. The lamps, furnished with fresh oil and new kindled, burnt brilliantly, affording ample light to enable the priests to officiate in the sanctuary. Repairing now to the court, he filled a censer with fire from off the brazen altar; and, re-entering the Holy Place, put it on the golden altar, at the same time dropping a handful of incense on the fire. Immediately clouds pregnant with sweet odours arose, and, penetrating through the vail, they were borne onwards to Israel's God, enthroned in visible symbol on the mercy-seat (Exod. xxx. 7-11).

No mention is made of sacred song as forming part of the service in the wilderness; but in the Holy Land it did, no fewer than 4000 Levites being specially set apart by David for conducting the praises of God's house.

The service in the evening was nearly similar to the morning one.

By means of the morning and evening services, the sins respectively of the past night and day were atoned for, at least so far as to effect the temporal remission of punishment, and to secure the continuance of God's gracious presence in Israel's midst.

The devotion of the whole animal, as a sacrifice, was representative of the people anew dedicating themselves wholly to God. The meat offering, which accompanied the sacrifice of the morning and evening lamb, was an acknowledgment of God as the bestower of daily mercies. While thanking God by it for mercies received, they also by it looked to Him as the source from whence fresh supplies were to be drawn; so that through this offering we may hear the voice of supplication, as well as of thanksgiving, saying—"Give us this day our daily bread." How meet it was that the Israelites, favoured by God above all

the nations of the earth, should begin and end the day with these appropriate services. By the offering of incense the priest symbolically interceded with God for the people. The ascending perfumed cloud was the nation's embodied prayer. Israelites in the court, and not improbably many who gathered around the sacred precincts without, as well as the pious throughout the camp, knowing the time of incense, made it a time of prayer; so that with the morning and evening incense, their united supplications might blend, and together reach the mercy-seat.

The two chief parts of the morning and evening service were typical of the two great parts of Christ's work. The lamb sacrificed typified His atonement, and the offering of incense His intercession. The daily burnt offering, more significantly than the free-will burnt offerings, prefigured the death of Christ; for while these might be taken from oxen, sheep, goats, or doves, that must be a lamb. Christ is never called an ox, a sheep, or a goat, but He is named the "Lamb of God." It also more significantly than they foreshadowed the necessity of daily application of the blood of Jesus to a sinner's conscience, in order to his forgiveness. The offering of incense prefigured the intercession of Him, who, with His own blood, passed through the vail into the true holy of holies; where, at the heavenly throne, He ever liveth to plead its merits on behalf of His believing people, as He presents their evening and morning prayers, as well as all their holy breathings to His and their heavenly Father.

In the more corrupt ages of Jewish history, the offering of sacrifices and of incense became a dead letter, to the great majority of both priests and people. For by engaging in the services of the sanctuary with impure and impenitent hearts, their sacrifices and their incense became an "abomination to Him" (Prov. xv. 8; Isa. i. 10-17). This sad result, however, did not arise from any defect in these means of grace. They were God's appointed ones for the spiritual growth of His ancient people, and it was

in an humble and prayerful improvement of them that Old Testament saints were made meet for the inheritance of the saints of light. Daily communion with God tended to keep alive the flame of spiritual life in their souls. God's promise to those who frequented the sanctuary was—"There I will meet with thee." The language of pious souls was—"We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, even of Thy holy temple;" and, when deprived of the privilege of worshipping there, they ardently longed for a renewal of it—

> "My thirsty soul longs veh'mently,
> Yea faints, Thy courts to see;
> My very heart and flesh cry out,
> O living God, for Thee."

There were always some, even in the most corrupt ages of Jewish history, who worshipped God in spirit and in truth, and who, like David and Isaiah, and Zacharias the priest, and good old Simeon, drew water daily out of these wells of salvation, and in every bleeding sacrifice beheld the bleeding "Lamb of God." It is so still. The means of grace to some are a savour of life, to others a savour of death. There are still, as of old, many merely formal worshippers. On the other hand, there are many, and an ever increasing number, who profit by waiting upon the Lord in the Christian assembly, and delight greatly when their steps are bent thitherward, like the pious worshipper of old who sang joyfully—"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

And while in the sanctuary they engage in spirit in the same exercises as Old Testament saints did in the Tabernacle and Temple, the great sacrifice is held up in the Christian assembly not in type, but in truth. Every faithful minister of the Gospel considers it his greatest honour and privilege to hold it up. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." There

too, incense is offered up—even the praise and prayers that ascend from the altar of renewed hearts—to the heavenly throne. Do you delight in visiting the courts of the Lord's house? If so, it is well. Seek earnestly that your desire may increase, and then you will not fail to be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of God's house.

In the Christian sanctuary there is not daily worship, as there was in the courts of the Tabernacle and Temple; and yet daily communion with God is still necessary as a means of spiritual life to believers. If you are content to engage in religious exercises in the public assemblies of God's people only, you have reason to fear that you are not yet a child of God. The privilege of daily worship you may enjoy at the family altar, and in your own closets, and surely no true Christian will be content with less than morning and evening service. The Christian is under deeper obligations than Old Testament saints were, to begin and end the day with exercises implying thankfulness for mercies received, sorrow for sin, pardon sought through the blood of atonement, and the consecration of themselves, and all they have, to Him who bought them with His own precious blood. Our first look every morning, and our last one every night, should be to the atoning Lamb of God; our first notes of praise when we awake, and our last ones ere we fall asleep, should be songs of praise to our adorable Redeemer; and our first givings at the dawn of day, and our last ones at its close, should be the giving of ourselves anew to Him who gave Himself for us. If we live in daily communion with God, we will go on unto perfection, every day exhibiting more and more of the beauty of holiness. Thus living, we need not be afraid to die. Thus living, how calmly at night we may lay our head on our pillow and close our eyes, knowing that if these should never again open here, they will open in that bright world where there is no night, but endless day; or, when leaving our dwellings in the morning to pursue our daily calling, how cheerfully we may go forth, knowing

that if death should overtake us by the way, and prevent us from ever again re-entering our earthly habitation, we will find a home in the skies; or should we, like the great majority of our fellows, have some little warning of our approaching dissolution, how peaceful our dying bed will be! The sable curtains of death, as they gather around us, shall not greatly frighten us; nor shall the footsteps of the last enemy, as we hear them entering our chamber, overwhelm us with terrors. Oh no! having long been in the daily habit of looking with child-like trust to Him who is the Light of the World, and of committing our souls to Him who is the Prince of Life, it will not be difficult for us, when standing on Jordan's bank, to trust Him,—to trust Him, our best and dearest friend, who, all radiant with light and glory, will then hold out to us His loving and Almighty hand; and, as we place ours in it for the last time on this side of the river, committing our way to Him, we will not fear, but feel safe and happy: assured that He will guide us through the dark valley, and bring us in safety into the better land, and into His Father's house of many mansions.

"Jesus, the vision of Thy face
Hath overpow'ring charms;
Scarce shall I feel death's cold embrace
If Christ be in my arms."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT.

A GREAT day in Israel was the tenth of the seventh month (our September). The people, who were early astir, might have been seen in multitudes crowding to the sanctuary, in obedience to the Divine command: "Ye shall have on this day an holy convocation" (Num. xxix. 7). All secular work was suspended. "It shall be a Sabbath of rest" (*lit.* Sabbath of Sabbath) "unto you" (Lev. xvi. 31), and a day of humiliation on account of the sins of the past year: "Ye shall afflict your souls" (ver. 29). National sin not only polluted the people, but also the beautiful sanctuary, and so defiled them and it, as to render it necessary, in addition to all the sacrifices offered during the preceding twelve months, that they and it should this day be purged with atoning blood.

Besides the usual stated daily burnt offering, there was an additional one this day, consisting of one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs, with the accompanying meat and drink offerings (Num. xxix. 7, 8); but the special offerings (Lev. xvi.) were:

1*st*, A young bullock for a sin offering for Aaron and his house.

2*d*, Two goats for a sin offering for the people.

3*d*, A ram for a burnt offering for Aaron and his house.

4th, A ram for a burnt offering for the people.

Much is said about the sin offerings in Lev. xvi., but little about the other forms of sacrifice; and this is quite in keeping with the character of the day, for the former, in a much higher degree than the latter, had an expiatory character.

Aaron having washed his whole body in water, and dressed (ver. 4), not in the high priest's golden robes, but simply in the white linen garments, began the services peculiar to the day of annual atonement by presenting at the door of the tabernacle the bullock for himself and his house, and then the two goats for the people, upon which he cast lots—one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scape goat. The goat upon which the lot fell for the Lord, he again presented before the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle. The first time it, along with the other, formed one united offering; the second time, it was for a sin offering to be sacrificed in the usual way. This, however, was not to be the destiny of its fellow, for when it was again presented, it was as a live goat, to be sent away alive for a scape goat into the wilderness.

Aaron, after slaying the bullock for himself and his house, entered the Tabernacle, carrying in one hand a censer filled with burning coals of fire from off the brazen altar, and in his other sweet incense. The golden candlestick on his left, and the shewbread table on his right, and the golden altar before him, were sacred yet familiar objects; but on this more than ordinary solemn occasion, he is on his way to the holy of holies, where God in visible symbol was enthroned on the ark of the covenant. For the last twelve months no one, not even the high priest, had visited this innermost chamber of the Holy One of Israel. With the deepest reverence, Aaron lifted the vail, and immediately on entering placed the censer on the ground, dropping at the same time the incense on the fire, so that clouds of sweet odours at once arose and partially hid the shekinah, but for which he might not have dared

to look upon this symbol of the Divine presence. Leaving the incense burning, he retraced his steps to the court, and there receiving the blood of the slain bullock, returned to the throne room, and sprinkled it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward; and before the mercy-seat with his finger seven times. The blood he sprinkled was an acknowledgment, that on account of the sins of the past year, he and his house were unclean and deserved death; but on the ground of that blood, cried for and obtained forgiveness and cleansing.

The goat upon which the lot fell for the Lord, being the people's sin offering, was now slain by Aaron, who carried its blood into the holy of holies, and sprinkled it in the same manner as he had done that of the bullock; and as for himself in his previous entry, so now for them he asks and obtains forgiveness of the sins which they had been guilty of during the past year. His reappearance in the court is the signal that all Israel are pardoned.

Not the people only, but the Tabernacle itself required cleansing, for it was polluted by reason of the sins of those in whose midst it stood. The sprinkling of the blood upon the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat has sufficed for the cleansing of the most holy place, as well as for Aaron and the people. The holy place must also be cleansed. With the mingled blood of both sin offerings, Aaron approached the golden altar (Lev. xvi. 18; Exod. xxx. 10), and rubbed the blood upon its horns, and then sprinkled it upon the altar seven times, by which rite, it is probable, not only the altar, but the holy place itself, was cleansed. The remainder of the blood was poured out at the foot of the brazen altar, and this probably constituted its cleansing and that of the court as well; for, by the law, almost all things are purged with blood.

For Aaron, his house, the people, the holy of holies, the incense altars, and the holy place, the altar of burnt offerings and the court, atonement has now been made—all these have been cleansed with blood.

The people did not fear now that, on account of the sins of the past year, flashes of fire from the cloudy pillar would consume them, nor the plague destroy them, nor their Divine King depart from their midst. He will continue to dwell in the beautiful Tabernacle as His palace temple, and suffer the people to approach and hold communion with Him through the medium of the high priest.

After such significant rites, all pointing to the remission of sin and the complete cleansing of the people and the Tabernacle, was anything further done this day in order to set forth the complete blotting out of sin? Yes. Behold the scape goat. Aaron puts his hand upon its head. He is confessing over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the live goat. He now sends the sin-laden goat by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. This man led the goat down the court, out at the gate, through the streets formed by the tents of the thousands of Israel, and when beyond the encampment, he let it go into the wilderness, where it was lost. There it may have been torn to pieces by wild beasts, or may have died a slow agonising death from hunger and thirst, or from some other cause; but how or when it died we are not informed, and it was not necessary we should, for it was not its final doom that was intended to portray in vivid colour to the Israelites the great and comforting truth, that God that day had so completely forgiven the Israelites as to look upon them in their civil relation to Himself as if they had never sinned at all. Their sins were removed to such a distance from Him, that when "sought for they should not be found," so far hath He removed our iniquities from us, as the east is distant from the west; and all this is strikingly set forth in the scape goat burdened with the nation's sins, being sent away into the wilderness, where they are as completely lost as if they had been cast into the depths of the ocean.

The goat that was sacrificed, and the one that was sent

into the wilderness, are two features of the same picture. The blood of the slain goat sprinkled on the mercy-seat, signified that pardon and cleansing were obtained through the shed blood of the innocent victim. The scape goat, laden with the nation's sins, and sent into the wilderness, showed how completely sin was forgiven, and how entirely the people were cleansed from its defilement. The two goats were necessary to represent sufficiently to the Israelites the blessings that day secured to them by the work of atonement. If life could have been restored to the dead goat, it would have been sent into the wilderness, and the other one dispensed with. While Aaron was engaged in the solemn work of annual atonement, he was dressed, as we have seen, in the white garments only; but having slain the sin offerings, and sprinkled their blood as already described, he entered the holy place, and again washed his body in water (Lev. xvi. 24), and arrayed himself in the golden robes (Lev. xvi. 24), so that when he reappeared in the court he was resplendent in his shining and coloured vestments.

By the atonement made this day for Israel, the barriers that stood in the way of their approach to God were removed, so that they might now approach Him through the medium of the high priest. The way of access being open, Aaron now offered the burnt offerings: the ram for himself, and the ram for the people. After this, he burnt the fat of his own and the people's sin offering on the altar. The man who led the sin-laden goat into the wilderness, having contracted defilement by touching the animal, was required to wash his clothes and bathe his flesh in water before being permitted to re-enter the court. The bodies of the bullock and the goat which were sacrificed still lie in the court. Their blood has already been carried into the most holy place, and sprinkled on the mercy-seat, and their fat has been burnt on the altar; now their carcasses were removed out of the court and beyond the camp to the place where the ashes were poured out. What this

was significant of has already been pointed out (*see* p. 129).

The whole of the rites of this day were typical of the atoning work of our great High Priest. Aaron's washing himself, and putting on white raiment, and making atonement for his own sins before doing so for the people, shadowed forth the necessity of the perfect holiness of our great High Priest. He "offered Himself without spot to God."

No one was in the Tabernacle when Aaron officiated in the great day of annual atonement, and this circumstance points to Christ's having the sole merit of atonement. He shares it with no one. He trod the wine-press alone.

The high priest, as we have seen, after slaying the sin offerings, carried their blood into the most holy place, and there, amidst clouds of incense which covered the golden throne, sprinkled it on the mercy-seat, and interceded with God for Israel, the clouds of incense being his embodied prayer, and the sprinkled blood the ground on which forgiveness and all needed blessings were sought. So Christ, our great High Priest, after dying for sinners on the cross, ascended up on high, and, parting the blue vail of the skies, entered the true holy of holies, carrying with Him, not the blood of bulls and goats, but His own ; and there, where the incense of His all-prevailing intercession not only covers the mercy-seat, but fills all heaven with its grateful odours, ever liveth to plead its merits on behalf of His believing people.

"Once in the circuit of a year,
With blood, but not his own,
Aaron within the vail appears,
Before the golden throne.

"But Christ, by His own powerful blood
Ascends above the skies,
And in the presence of our God
Shows His own sacrifice."

The scape goat, laden with the sins of the people, and

sent into the wilderness, is typical of the complete blotting out of sin, through the atoning work of our Great High Priest, and of sin, when forgiven by God, being removed out of His sight.

We have seen what the atonement, made on this day, effected for the Israelites. As far as pertaineth to the flesh, they were cleansed, and their sins, as far at least as they deserved temporal punishment, were forgiven; but spiritual and eternal blessings could only be obtained through the medium of a greater High Priest, and a greater sin offering—even through Christ. His blood, His alone, can sanctify to the cleansing of a guilty conscience, and save from everlasting punishment, and bring sinners near to the Holy One of Israel.

"Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.

"But Christ, the Lamb of God,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of richer blood
And nobler name than they.

"Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing His dying love."

The pious Israelite, however, on the day of annual atonement, was not merely benefited in a temporal point of view, as all his brethren were, but also spiritually; for by faith he looked through the types to the anti-types, and thus seeing the promises afar off, embraced them.

At the conclusion of the services, Aaron blessed the congregation; but our Great High Priest never ceases to shower down blessings, great and without number, upon His people.

The day of annual atonement was the greatest day in

the Jewish year; but, great as it was, it was but the shadow of greater days. The day that Christ was born at Bethlehem, and laid in the manger; the day that Christ hung upon Calvary's cross, and witnessed His dying accents proclaiming to the ends of the earth, and to the end of time, redemption's completed work—"It is finished;" the day that Christ arose triumphant from the grave; and the day that Christ ascended from Mount Olivet,—these are the greatest days in the world's history, perhaps in that of the universe. They stand out alone from all the days of the past, and will do so from all the days of the future.

The great lesson to be learnt from the subject we have been considering is: That "without shedding of blood is no remission." May we ever be seeking to have our consciences sprinkled with the precious blood of Christ, and we shall "have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins," access at all times to a throne of grace, and enjoy the light of God's countenance now, and hereafter "dwell forever in His holy Tabernacle."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ENCAMPMENT AND ORDER OF MARCH.

IN form, the Encampment was square, the Tabernacle occupying the central position, and the four grand divisions of the army of Israel camping around it, one on each side. The space between the sanctuary and the first line of tents is not mentioned; but from Joshua iii. 4, some suppose it was at least 2000 cubits, being the distance between the Ark of the Covenant and the Israelites when they passed over Jordan. This reserved space was probably holy ground, and sanctified, as Mount Sinai had been, by God's manifested presence; and, as in the case of that holy mount, death may have been the penalty for trespassing on it, or even touching it with hand or foot. The Levites were the guardians of this sacred ground, as well as of the holy habitation and its court. They pitched their tents near and around the Tabernacle, and consequently somewhere between the inner line of the tents of the other tribes and the Tabernacle. Although the Israelites were not permitted access to the space between their tents and the Tabernacle for secular purposes, the prohibition did not exclude them from it when their *legitimate* object was to draw near God for the purpose of worship, or when called together on

great national occasions. The Levites camped in the following order around the Tabernacle :

At the East,

and before the gate of the court, were pitched the tents of

MOSES, AARON, AND THE PRIESTS

(Num. iii. 38).

On the South Side,

the tents of the

KOHATHITES

(Num. iii. 29).

On the North Side,

the tents of the

MERARITES

(Num. iii. 35).

And on the West Side,

the tents of the

GERSHONITES

(Num. iii. 23.)

It was a wise arrangement that this tribe should pitch its tents near and around the holy Tabernacle, as the 8580 males above the age of thirty belonging to it, were the appointed ministers of the sanctuary (Num. iv. 47, 48) ; sentinels to guard it (Num. i. 53) ; labourers to rear it and take it down (Num. i. 51) ; carriers to transport it from place to place (Num. iv.) ; servants to assist its priests in

their sacred duties (Num. iii. 9) ; and instructors to teach the thousands of Israel that camped on every side of them (Deut. xxxiii. 8, 10; 2 Chron. xvii. 8, 9).

Each grand division or army of Israel was composed of three tribes, and camped as follows :

On the East

(Num. ii. 2-10),

THE CAMP OF JUDAH

Comprising the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

On the South

(Num. ii. 10-17),

THE CAMP OF REUBEN,

Comprising the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad.

On the West

(Num. ii. 18-28),

THE CAMP OF EPHRAIM,

Comprising the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh.

And on the North

(Num. ii. 25-29),

THE CAMP OF DAN,

Comprising the tribes of Dan, Naphtali, and Asher.

The following diagram of the plan of the camp, will help to illustrate the preceding remarks.

There were, as the diagram shows, four great camps, one on each side of the Tabernacle. The camp of Judah on the east, numbering 186,400 adult males ; the camp of

DIAGRAM OF THE ENCAMPMENT.

East.

FIRST DIVISION—CAMP OF JUDAH, 186,400.

JUDAH.

ISSACHAR, 54,400. | 74,600. And | ZEBULUN, 57,400.

"Every man of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house; far off about the Tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch."—Num. ii. 2.

Reserved space between the first line of the tents of the Israelites and those of the Levites. Supposed distance from the Tabernacle and the first line of the tents of the Israelites, 2000 cubits.—Josh. iii. 4.

"Far off about the Tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch."

Reserved space between the first line of the tents of Israel and the Levitical tents. Supposed distance from Tabernacle and the first line of the tents of the Israelites, 2000 cubits.

"The Levites shall pitch round about the Tabernacle." Num. i. 53.

Moses, Aaron, And the Priests.

* Levitical line of Tents.

Merarites, 3200.

Kohathites, 2750.

† Tabernacle Court.

Gershonites, 2630.

‡ Reserved space between Tabernacle Court and Levitical line of Tents.

"Far off about the Tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch."

Reserved space between the first line of the tents of the Israelites and those of the Levites. Supposed distance between the first line of the tents of the Israelites and the Tabernacle, 2000 cubits.

"Far off about the Tabernacle of the Congregation shall they pitch."

Reserved space between the first line of the tents of the Israelites and those of the Levites. Supposed distance between the Tabernacle and the first line of the tents of the Israelites, 2000 cubits.

FOURTH DIVISION—*North*—CAMP OF DAN, 157,600.

DAN. 62,700. | NAPHTALI, 53,400. | ASHER, 41,500.

SIMEON, 59,300. | REUBEN. 46,500 | GAD, 45,650.

THIRD DIVISION—CAMP OF EPHRAIM, 108,100.

EPHRAIM.

MANASSEH, 32,200 | And 40,500. | BENJAMIN, 35,400.

West.

Reuben on the south, 151,450; the camp of Ephraim on the west, 108,100; and the camp of Dan on the north, 157,600. The Levites camped, as already noticed, on every side, between the Tabernacle and the inner line of the four great camps.

Each of the great camps (including women, children, and old men) had a population four times that of the city of Edinburgh; and the whole encampment, in point of numbers, was about equal to that of the city of London, or of all Scotland, and must therefore have covered a very large space, probably not less than from eight to ten miles. The different camps, tribes, and families, had standards, flags, or ensigns to distinguish them from each other. These banners, doubtless, differed from one another, but whether in consequence of varying in colour or of having various emblematical figures embroidered on them is uncertain, the Bible being silent on the subject. All was arranged so as to secure the most perfect order, "Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the Tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch" (Num. ii. 2). This city of tents must have presented a most beautiful spectacle. In the centre stood the Tabernacle, its golden walls and silver foundation shining resplendently, and its sky-blue covering pointing to the heavens above, where is the "true Tabernacle not made with hands." Resting upon it was the cloudy pillar, sheltering from the burning rays of the sun the thousands of Israel beneath. "He spread a cloud for a covering," so that "the sun did not smite them by day, nor the moon by night." Around the sanctuary was the court of the Lord's house, having in the centre the brazen altar, with its bright exterior, and ascending from it the curling smoke of the sacrificial victims. A beautiful wall enclosed the court, consisting of pillars and linen hangings, the silver heads and brazen feet and glittering shafts of the former contrasting to advantage with the snowy whiteness of the latter. In the court might

have been seen the priests, arrayed in their robes "for glory and beauty." Beyond the walls, at some distance, were the tents of the Levites, pitched on every side, and forming another wall of defence to the holy habitation. beyond the Levitical tents, on every side, stretched away for miles the tents of the many thousands of Israel, all arranged in order, like a well laid-out city, in regular streets, and so planned, it is supposed, that each tent-door faced the sanctuary, enabling the people to worship God at their tent-doors, with their faces towards the sanctuary.

All this vast encampment, as already mentioned, was covered over by the expanded cloud—the outspread protecting wings of the Keeper of Israel. Can you doubt that the encampment of Israel in the wilderness was a scene of surpassing loveliness? Hear the description given of it by an eyewitness—one who was not a friend, but a foe of Israel, and not merely an enemy, but a false prophet, and who was sent for by a wicked and idolatrous king for the very purpose of cursing Israel. The prophet Balaam, standing on the top of a mountain, the camp of Israel spread out in the plain beneath, essays to curse Israel, but is so overwhelmed by the imposing spectacle that burst upon his view that, in spite of himself, blessings, and not curses, roll from his lips: "From the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him." "Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth-part of Israel?" "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar-trees beside the waters. God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath, as it were, the strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones. He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee" (Num. xxiii. 9, 10; xxiv. 5, 6, 8, 9).

The Order of March

(Num. x.)

LEVITES,

Bearing the Ark of the Covenant

(Num. iv. 15 ; x. 38).

ARMY OF JUDAH

(Num. x. 14-16).

JUDAH.

ISSACHAR.

ZEBULUN.

THE MERARITES

(Num. x. 17),

with four waggons drawn by eight oxen, bearing the boards, bars, pillars, and sockets of the Tabernacle, and the court pillars and their sockets.

THE GERSHONITES

(Num. x. 17),

with two waggons, drawn by four oxen, bearing the curtains, coverings, and hangings of the Tabernacle and the hangings of the court.

THE ARMY OF REUBEN

(Num. x. 18, 20).

REUBEN.

SIMEON.

GAD.

KOHATHITES

(Num. x. 21),

carrying the sacred furniture of the sanctuary and the court.

THE ARMY OF EPHRAIM

(Num. x. 22, 24).

EPHRAIM.

MANASSEH.

BENJAMIN.

THE ARMY OF DAN

(Num. x. 25-27).

DAN.

ASHER.

NAPHTALI.

The rising of the cloudy pillar from off the Tabernacle was the Divine signal for the children of Israel to commence their journey. As soon as it was given, they began to take down their tents, and otherwise get ready for the way. In a very short time the whole camp presented a scene of busy and exciting preparation. As the encampment was arranged in the most perfect order, so was the order of march. Every camp, tribe, and family, marched in the place assigned it in the great army.

Levites, bearing aloft the ark, were the first to start. The ark, with the cloudy pillar right above, and perhaps resting on it, thus became a kind of sacred standard, going before "to search out a resting-place for them." The cloud giving the signal, it and the bearers of the ark moved forward simultaneously. The priests now blew an alarm with the silver trumpets for the army of Judah to start; and that tribe, bearing the leading standard of the whole army

of Israel, moved forwards, followed by the two tribes subordinate to it—those of Issachar and Zebulun. Next came the Merarites, who had charge of four waggons, drawn by eight oxen, and laden with the boards, bars, pillars, and sockets of the tabernacle, and the pillars and sockets of the court. Then the Gershonites, who had charge of two waggons, drawn by four oxen, and laden with the curtains, coverings, and hangings of the Tabernacle, and the hangings of the court. The priests again blew an alarm, and the army of Reuben obeyed the summons, and followed after the Merarites and the Gershonites. This army formed a guard to these two families of Levites, and the precious materials they had charge of. Next in the order of march was the Kohathites, carrying the sacred articles of furniture of the Tabernacle and court—viz., the golden altar, the table of shewbread, the golden candlestick, the brazen altar, laver, etc.—all of which were carefully covered with cloths. The army of Ephraim follow next, guardians of the Kohathites and the sacred vessels of the sanctuary. The army of Dan starts last, and formed the rearguard of the great army of Israel.

What a grand spectacle must this great army have presented as they marched through the wilderness in battle array, with innumerable banners displayed, and led on by the fiery cloudy pillar, which marched majestically in the air before them, guarding, lighting, and protecting them!

Great wisdom was displayed in the encampment and order of march. None of the arrangements were arbitrary in their nature. All was wisely ordered, and with a view to the welfare of all the tribes, and of every Israelite. We may not be able to see all the wise reasons why the army of Judah in the march led the van; why that of Dan formed the rearguard; why Reuben's army occupied the second place in the order of march; and why Ephraim's occupied the third place; or why such and such tribes were grouped together; but we are able to discover as many reasons as satisfy us that each army and each

tribe was assigned its place with a view to its own best interests, as well as that of the whole army of Israel.

The first place, we have already seen, was assigned to the Levites, including the priests. They camped nearest to the Tabernacle, and formed a kind of outer wall of defence to it; and in the march they had charge of the transport of the sanctuary and its sacred vessels. The next highest place is allotted to the tribe of Judah. It, and the two tribes subordinate to it, pitched their tents on the east and in the front, the position of greatest honour; and in the order of march it preceded the other three armies—the tribe of Judah thus leading the van of the whole army of Israel. Jacob, when blessing his sons, predicted the pre-eminence of Judah, and the tribe bearing his name, on that account, seemed to have a right to preference; yet the tribe of Levi was more honoured than it, in being set apart to sacred duties. This was, no doubt, humbling to the Judahites; but being placed in the forefront in the encampment, and leading the van in the order of march, may have been intended as compensation to them for the preference given to the Levites, and might well reconcile them to their position. With the tribe of Judah was associated the two tribes most closely allied to it by blood, affection, and other tender ties. Issachar and Zebulun were the descendants of Judah's two youngest brothers by the same mother. Though Judah had been predicted to the presidency of his brethren, Reuben was the first-born son of Jacob, and the tribe bearing his name on that account might feel that it had some claim to preference. That claim seems not to have been overlooked, for the first place is assigned it in the second great army, both in the camp and in the order of march. With the tribe of Reuben was associated those of Simeon and Gad. Simeon was Reuben's brother, by the same mother, Leah, and was next to him in the order of birth, Reuben being the eldest and Simeon the second eldest son. Gad was the first-born son of Leah's handmaid. Reuben and Simeon following each other in

the order of birth, and being nearly of the same age, were in a peculiar sense near to each other, and this may partly account for the two tribes bearing their names being assorted together. It was probably in consideration of Gad's being the first-born of Leah's handmaid that the tribe descending from him is honoured by being leagued with those of Reuben and Simeon, and on that account Gad would probably be the more willing to co-operate with these two. Besides forming the second army in the order of march, this one had the honour of guarding the sacred habitation and its court as these were transported by the Levites. The third grand division of three tribes embraced those of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, the descendants of Jacob by his favourite wife, Rachel, so that these three tribes were more closely related to one another than to any of the other tribes, and also by very peculiar and tender ties. This grand army of Ephraim was the third in the order of March, and followed and guarded the Kohathites, who carried the sacred vessels and furniture of the sanctuary. To guard the golden altar, the table of shewbread, the golden candlestick, the brazen altar, and the laver, was likely deemed of such honour by the army of Ephraim as to prevent it envying the posts allotted to the other tribes.

The fourth great camp was composed of the tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali, descendants of Jacob by his wives' handmaids. Of these, Dan was the leading tribe, and the army took its name from it. That Dan was appointed to the first place in one of the great armies seems to have been a recognition of the claims of the descendants of Jacob's concubines. Next to the army of Judah, that of Dan was the most numerous, and this fact was taken into account ; for, next to that of Judah, it was appointed to the place of greatest danger, the rear of the whole army. If Judah's army formed the vanguard, that of Dan formed the rearguard of the great army of Israel.

How admirably, then, was each tribe assigned its place

in the great encampment and in the order of march. The claims to some kinds of preference, that each one might be supposed to put forth, are duly recognised. The tribes most nearly related to one another, by blood, affection, or other ties, are grouped together, and each grand camp or army seems to occupy that position in the encampment and order of march which it appeared to have some claim to. All seems to have been so arranged as best to promote the peace and unity and well-being of the thousands of Israel, and advance them in their journey to the promised land. The more we study the plan of the encampment and order of march, the more we admire them, and the wisdom of Him who is "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

The Christian Church, though seemingly disunited, is as really one as the Jewish Church was in the wilderness. Though her members are of every colour, race, and people, and dwell in all parts of the world; and though they are divided into numerous sects, in consequence of their not yet seeing eye to eye on all points, yet they are all one. They have been washed in the same blood, and baptized by the same spirit, and they are animated with the same hopes. They are as really fellow-citizens as those were who composed the city of tents in the wilderness. They constitute but one great encampment, with the same glorious banner waving over them. They form but one great spiritual army, led on by the Captain of Salvation. They are all fellow pilgrims marching to the heavenly Canaan, guided by a great light in the way that they are to go, even by Him who is the "light of the world."

As every Israelite, and every tribe had the respective place in the encampment and in the order of march that each was to fill, appointed by God, so every New Testament Israelite has his place in the Church, and in the world as well, assigned him by God, and not arbitrarily, but, as in the case of the Israelites, wisely, and with a view to his own spiritual welfare, as well as to that of the whole Church.

If you be a child of God, seek ever to have a lively sense of the greatness of your privileges. They are far greater and far more numerous, than were those of the Israelites. Whatever be your position in the world, and especially in the Church, remember you are where God has seen meet to place you. You are a fellow citizen with all saints, a soldier of that great army which has Christ for its leader and commander, an heir of glory, and a pilgrim on the road to the heavenly Canaan. Ever seek to act as becometh your high calling. Do not forget that great privileges imply great responsibility and numerous duties to be performed. Whatever may be your place in the Church or in the world, seek to act in both as your Captain would have you. Think not, if you are poor or unlearned, or have few talents, that there is no need for you labouring in Christ's cause, or fighting in the ranks of His soldiers. Christ has work for all His followers—has a place in His army for every true convert. If you be one, you are in the place He has allotted you, and you possess the talents necessary to fill it. Some person or persons are in the circle of your influence to an extent which they are not so in that of any other party. Christ demands the active exertions of all His followers. Those who bear His name, but do nothing to advance His cause, give no evidence that they are His. It is easy for some professed Christians to frame plausible excuses for not aiding by their personal efforts the Gospel cause. Indeed, the number of such is legion; but these excuses will be of no avail on the day of judgment, for to all those who professed to be Christ's, but kept aloof from His service, and were not found fighting His battles, on that day He will say, "Depart from me, I never knew you." Suppose Judah had refused to lead the van, because Levi had been chosen to minister to the Lord; or suppose Dan had refused to bring up the rear, because Judah had been appointed to lead the van; or suppose this and that Israelite refused to take the place assigned him, because associated with this or that division, would

the army of Israel ever have taken possession of Canaan at all? So, in like manner, unless Christians are content to labour for the good of Zion with the means and with the talents God has given them, and in the place He has assigned them in the world and in the Church, the kingdoms of this world will never become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. If you are one of those who are now willingly, however humbly, labouring in the Master's service, be of good cheer, faint not by the way. You need not. You have Divine strength to support you, and an unerring guide to conduct you in the path of duty. If you bend your ear to Him, you may ever hear His encouraging voice, saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Turn your eyes towards Him, and you may ever behold Him, as a great light walking before you, and beckoning you onwards in the way you are to go. A good way, a way leading to victory, glory, honour, and immortality. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

CHAPTER XX.

THE FIERY CLOUDY PILLAR.

FROM the day the Tabernacle was reared in the midst of the Israelites, till the day they crossed the Jordan, the "cloud of the Lord" was associated with this portable temple, either abiding upon it, or moving in the air above the ark.

One of the beautiful names it bore was the Angel of God (Exod. xiv. 19), although no being but God Himself resided in it. We should bear in mind, then, that it was not one of the holy angels, but the cloud itself that was so designated.

The cloudy pillar was, no doubt, the outer envelopment of the mystic flame called the shekinah, which, unvailed, the Israelites would not have been able to behold, seeing that even Aaron, on the great day of atonement, when he entered the holy of holies, dared not look upon this symbol of the Divine presence until it was covered with clouds of incense. The ark of the covenant was the throne on which the shekinah rested. Of course, beneath the roof of the Tabernacle, it was surrounded by no outer cloudy folds to shroud it, as it was above the sacred structure.

When the Tabernacle had to be taken down preparatory to the Israelites removing to a new place of encampment, the shekinah, in all probability, ascended into the cloudy

pillar, which, as soon as the Levites, bearing the ark, had taken their place in the fore-front of the host, took up its position right above, and, perhaps tapering to the foot, so as to rest on this, the most sacred of all the articles of furniture pertaining to the Tabernacle. The cloud and the ark being thus inseparably linked together, accounts for the people being represented as following the one, and sometimes the other.

The cloudy pillar, we are told in Exod. xxxiii. 9, talked with Moses—phraseology easily comprehended, when we take into account the close connection that existed between the shekinah and it, which was somewhat analogous to that between the spirit and the body.

This "Angel of God" performed many friendly offices to the Israelites. It was:

1*st*, *A Guide.* To lead was its main mission. "The Lord went before them by day, in a pillar of cloud, to lead them in the way; and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, to go by day and night" (Exod. xiii. 20-22). Tall in stature, and having the appearance of a silvery cloud by day, and of fire by night, it rose conspicuous to view in the dark night as well as in the bright day, and it claimed and received the implicit obedience of the many thousands of Israel. When it moved forward they followed, and when it stood still they halted, and encamped beneath its sheltering wings. It ever guided them in the right way, and in the path of safety, however much it may seem sometimes to have been acting otherwise. It apparently led them in the wrong direction when they commenced to march under its leadership, and caused them to encamp for the first time in a situation which tempted their enemies to pursue, and all but overtake them; but it was the right way after all, as the pilgrims, when they saw the salvation of God, acknowledged in transports of joy, and in a triumphant song. While the pillar cloud was leading the host of Israel to Pi-hahiroth, and through the Red Sea, and up and down wadies, and by mountain sides, and through the

"great and terrible wilderness," and into the vicinity of implacable foes, it was ever an unerring guide. He led them forth by the right way, and He led them on in safety so that they feared not (Ps. lxxviii. 53). The pillar was a striking illustration of the long-suffering kindness of our God. Neither murmurings, nor rebellion, nor idolatry, ever drove away the angel of His presence. The guidance vouchsafed, too, was of the most gracious kind. It was like that of a shepherd. He maketh His own people to go forth like sheep, and guideth them in the wilderness like a flock (Ps. lxxviii. 52). Nor like a shepherd only, but like a loving and affectionate parent. "The Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place (Deut. i. 31).

2d, A Light. Had not the pillar changed its aspect when the sable curtains of night gathered around the host, it would have become invisible; but as soon as day departed it became a bright, shining, and resplendent column, visible to every eye, and it served now not only to guide, but also to illumine, and whether the army marched or encamped ever gave a cheering light. The hours of night in the "terrible wilderness" must have been very dismal but for the friendly light shed around the pilgrims by the fiery pillar. "The pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go" (Neh. ix. 19).

3d, A Shade. "He spread a cloud for a covering" (Ps. cv. 39). Only those who have wandered in deserts, under the scorching sun of the east, can form an adequate idea of the pleasing effect which would be afforded by this grateful awning. The head of the cloud appears to have been expanded to such an extent as to overshadow the Israelites, so that the sun did not smite them by day, nor the moon by night.

4th, A Shield. "The Lord your God, which goeth before you, He shall fight for you" (Deut. i. 30). Salva-

tion was sure to the Israelites when this cloud of the Lord interposed between them and their enemies. At the Red Sea it became an impenetrable barrier between the pursuing and the pursued. "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them" (Exod. xiv. 19)—the side towards the Egyptians being one of awful darkness, causing their utter destruction, but that towards the Hebrews one of glorious light, which guided the host of Israel in safety to the eastern shore of the Red Sea. Thus, on that eventful night, the fiery cloudy pillar proved both a sun and shield to God's chosen people.

5*th, An Oracle.* The pillar of cloud talked with Moses, and it issued commands. It is not improbable that when the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friends, that the inner resplendent flame, which was the symbol of the Divine presence, was manifested to him. In Ps. xcix. 7, we read, "He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar." From this oracle sounded forth words necessary for the direction and instruction of the congregation. The same mysterious fire that opened its mouth in the bush at Horeb, opened its mouth in the cloudy pillar, and frequently spake to Israel's leader for Israel's benefit.

6*th, An Avenger.* When God wished to mark His displeasure, the cloud assumed a very wrathful appearance. The Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and troubled the host of the Egyptians. What a dreadful vision it must have worn when flashes went forth from it and devoured Nadab and Abihu (Lev. x. 2), and also when fire came out from it and consumed two hundred and fifty men! (Num. xvi. 35). If the aspect of the cloud was thus at times such as to trouble those with whom God was angry, it would, no doubt, have a very pleasing one when He desired to manifest His favour to the congregation. As they looked up, they would behold the smiling face of their Divine leader cheering and en-

couraging them to go on in the path of duty. The pillar-cloud is called by this very name, "face." "If Thy presence" (*Heb.* face) "go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Exod. xxxiii. 15).

Such, then, were some of the ends served by this "Angel of God." It was a guide, a light, a shade, a shield, and an avenger. It led, it illumined, it screened, it protected, it spoke, it smiled, it frowned. It showed the way, and beckoned the thousands of Israel to follow. It turned the darkness into light. It warded off the darts of the noonday sun. It was a bulwark between the Hebrews and the Egyptians. It fought for the chosen people. When pleased, it rewarded, and when provoked beyond the limits of forbearance, it punished. It continued its friendly guidance, and light, and protection, and counsel, and encouragement, until it conducted the host of Israel safely across the Jordan, and into that good land and large, the promised land of Canaan. Of all the objects ever seen by the Hebrew pilgrims, this must have been the grandest, most imposing, and resplendent. Greatly privileged were the people to whom it was vouchsafed. To them, and to them only, pertained the "glory."

The Christian pilgrim is favoured with no such visible manifestation of the Deity as he travels through the wilderness of this world to the heavenly Canaan. He must hold on his way without ever seeing with bodily eye "the glory," and without ever hearing the audible voice of Him who spake in the cloudy pillar. Are the privileges, then, of the children of God less under the Gospel dispensation than were those of the Hebrews under the Mosaic one? By no means. In reference to this very cloudy pillar, there are glorious predictions respecting New Testament Israelites. "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence" (Isa. iv. 5). "Arise,

shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa. lx. 1.)

The fiery cloudy pillar was the dispenser mainly of temporal blessings, and was itself temporary in its nature, and so passed away; but the blessings promised in the above texts are spiritual and everlasting.

Christ is to the Christian pilgrim what the fiery cloudy pillar was to the host of Israel.

(1.) *He is a Guide.* He says, I am the way. He guides by His example. We shall be walking in His footsteps if, when we are assailed by temptation, we place the tempter at our back, when reviled, we revile not again, when ill used, we return good for evil, and if, like Him, we make it our business to go about continually doing good. If we thus follow Christ, the enemies of our souls will be unable to overcome us, or to obstruct us on our heavenward path, and we will be more than conquerors through Him who loved us. If early in the morning we follow His steps up the mount of devotion, we will descend as He did, refreshed with the dews of heaven, and strengthened for the duties and toils of the day, and in the evening we will pitch our moving tents a day's march nearer home. Christ also guides by His word. The Bible, like the "angel of God" to the Hebrews, is an ever present and seen guide. We can see it with our bodily eyes, and even feel it with our hands; and, open it where we may, discern it ever pointing onwards and upwards. If we follow its guidance, we will not miss the way, nor fail to reach at last the blessed shores of Canaan. Christ ever leadeth His people in the right direction, even when like the cloud He seems to be acting otherwise. Into whatever circumstances of difficulty, suffering, or danger he may bring them, they need not have the slightest fears, for He is a Divine and unerring leader. Be strong in faith, ye whose believing eyes are fixed on Jesus, your pillar cloud; and even should unscalable mountains appear to rise between you and the land to which you are travelling, or should great and

impassable deeps seem to intervene between you and it, be assured that though the road looks like the wrong way, it is the right one after all. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

(2.) *Christ is a Light.* He says, "I am the light of the world" (John viii. 12). Till illumined by Him none can see. It is His office to pour celestial light on the eyes of the spiritually blind. It is the same great light that chases away our darkness and enables us to see the first step in the Christian's course that brightens our path during all the succeeding ones of our journey to the heavenly Canaan. We can only miss the road or stumble on it if we wilfully shut our eyes and refuse to admit His glorious rays. John the baptist, as well as all other burning and shining lights, only reflected the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. He lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And He is not only the light of the world, but of heaven also. "The city had do need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. xxi. 23).

(3.) *Christ is a Shade.* To pilgrims travelling heavenwards, He is "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," for while He screens them from the burning sun of this busy, bustling, honour and pleasure-seeking world, they are preserved from being withered and scorched. Were this blessed shelter denied them, how soon would all that is lovely, and pure, and God-like in their souls be burned out? Favoured by it, they may so engage in this world's business, and may enjoy such a share of its honours and pleasures as shall not retard, but promote, their heavenward journey. While within the shadow cast by a present and gracious Saviour they are safe; it is only when they venture beyond this that their souls are in danger.

(4.) *Christ is a Shield.* "My grace is sufficient for

thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 9). Defended by His grace, what enemies can overcome the righteous? If Christ come between them and the legion of foes that are ever seeking the destruction of their souls, are they not as safe from the assaults of their foes as were the Hebrews from those of the Egyptians at the Red Sea, when the cloudy pillar stood between the pursuing and the pursued? Weak at the best are Christians in themselves, as the Israelites would have been had they been left to themselves at Pi-hahiroth. The Christian's strength lies in his knowing his own weakness, and in laying hold of an almighty buckler—a buckler ever ready and at hand. However many and strong the enemies may be that are bent on his soul's ruin, he has but to look away from himself, and up to Him in whom "all fulness dwells," and as he looks, to exclaim, My sufficiency is of Thee, in order to be effectually guarded, and to experience that when he is weak then is he strong. His soul is exposed to the enemy's darts only when he neglects to interpose between it and them this almighty armour. Guarded by it, he may sing, "The Lord is my buckler, my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust."

(5.) *Christ is an Oracle*, or rather *the oracle*. He is the "Word," the grand medium of communication between God and man: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared Him" (John i. 18). "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Heb. i. 1). These prophets only spake as they were moved by the "Word." Let us bend our ears to this Great Oracle, and listen to His voice, and obey His commands, and we will become wise unto salvation, and receive all necessary direction for our journey through this wilderness world to the heavenly Canaan.

Christ, like the wondrous cloud, looks with a smiling countenance on His people; but, like it, He is also an avenger; for while He is not willing that any should perish, but rather that all should repent and believe, yet He it is who will pass the awful sentence of condemnation on the finally impenitent, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Christ, then, as really as this "angel of God" that went before the Hebrew host, is a guide, a light, a shade, a shield, an oracle, and an avenger. He leads and enlightens, and defends and guards, and instructs and comforts, and cheers by His word and Spirit. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. cxix. 105). "When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee; for the commandment is a lamp; and the law is a light" (Prov. vi. 22, 23).

The Hebrews, in the march to the Holy Land, were a type of the Christian in his journey through this world to heaven. Jesus is the glorious shekinah, that walks before him all the way to the better land. Fixed be your eyes on Him, and you will find Him more precious to you than was the friendly pillar to the Israelites. It led them, we are told, like a shepherd; and if you are led by Him, you are following the "good Shepherd," and can claim Him as your own. "The Lord is my shepherd."

It led them into pleasant places of encampment, and so will He lead you.

> "The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
> He makes me down to lie
> In pastures green: He leadeth me
> The quiet waters by."

At the Jordan the cloud took its departure. It did not accompany the Israelites into Canaan, but Christ will never leave those whom He has guided through this wilderness into the land of bliss, but there continue to lead them into fountains of living waters:

"The Lamb which dwells amidst the throne
Shall o'er them still preside;
Feed them with nourishment divine,
And all their footsteps guide.

"'Mong pastures green he'll lead his flock,
Where living streams appear;
And God the Lord from ev'ry eye
Shall wipe off ev'ry tear."

Are you following the Lamb whithersoever His footsteps lead? Are you guided by His word and Spirit. If not, you are going after a leader whose steps lead down to hell. While it is not yet too late, turn your eyes to Jesus. Obey His summons: "Follow me." "Arise, O thou that sleepest," and enrol under the banner of the Captain of Salvation. Once under His guidance, you have nothing to fear. His promise is, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Blessed Jesus! if Thou forsake me not, then, be the way ever so dark, ever so long, ever so difficult, ever so beset with enemies, ever so impeded with barriers, and be the privations ever so numerous, I will not fear, for in spite of all these hindering things, Thou wilt lead me on in safety, and I shall reach home at last:

"My Father's house on high,
Home of my soul, how near!
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye
Thy golden gates appear."

Not all who marched after the fiery cloudy pillar were privileged to enter Canaan—multitudes perished by the way; but none of Jesus' followers ever perish on the road to glory; every one of them, even the feeblest of the flock, will be landed safely at last on the blessed shores of Immanuel's land.

THE END.